

Vattasseril Geevarghese Malpan
(Saint Geevarghese Mar Dionysius)

BASIC DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH

(Matopadesha Sarangal)



Translated from the Malayalam original
with an introduction by
Dr. Yakob Mar Irenaios

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Anyone who asks for this volume, to read, collate, or copy from it, and who appropriates it to himself or herself, or cuts anything out of it, should realize that (s)he will have to give answer before God's awesome tribunal as if (s)he had robbed a sanctuary. Let such a person be held anathema and receive no forgiveness until the book is returned. So be it, Amen! And anyone who removes these anathemas, digitally or otherwise, shall himself receive them in double.

BASIC DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH

(True Translation of MATOPADESHA SARANGAL)

Vattasseril Geevarghese Malpan
(Saint Geevarghese Mar Dionysius)

Translated with an introduction by
Metropolitan Dr. Yakob Mar Irenaios



MOC Publications
Devalokam, Kottayam

Basic Doctrines of the Church (English)

(True Translation of Matopadesha Sarangal)

By: Vattasseril Geevarghese Malpan

Translated with an introduction by

Metropolitan Dr. Yakob Mar Irenaios

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Dedicated to

the inspiring memory of two martyrs of the
Malankara Orthodox Church

SRI. VARKEY VARGHESE ASAN
(Anapappy)

The personal security to Malankara Sabha Bhasuran. Vattasseril Geevarghese Mar Dionysius. He was fatally attacked on the banks of River Meenachil that winds its way about the Old Seminary campus, by thugs planted by the enemies of the Metropolitan, on 30th March 1912 and he succumbed to injuries the following day. The mortal remains of this brave soldier of the Church lie buried at St. Mary's Puthenpally, Kottayam.

SRI. T. M. VARGHESE
(Malankara Varghese)

An ardent defender of the Malankara Orthodox Church, who was attacked with deadly weapons on the public road by the sworn opponents of the Church, and died within a short time. His mortal remains are interred in the cemetery of the Bethel Suloko Church, Perumbavoor.

These matchlessly brave sons of the Malankara Church sacrificed their lives on the altar of the freedom of the Church, which they held dearer than their lives. The Church is proud of their lives and sacrifice, and fondly cherishes their memory! May the Lord reward them for their selfless services and sacrifice. The Church shall not rest till she fulfills the dream that they nursed and died for, to keep the detractors of the freedom of this Church at bay and hold the dignity and banner of its autocephaly sky-high!

May their precious lives continue to inspire us!

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Message from His Holiness the Catholicos

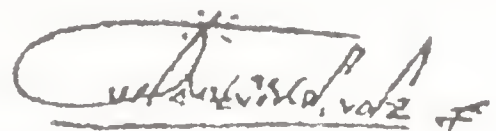
Blessings to the members of the M.O.C. Publications Committee and all those who are involved in the publication of the English translation of 'Matopadesha Sarangal'.

Beloved of the Lord,

As you all know, the late lamented Malankara Metropolitan Vattasseril Geevarghese Mar Dionysius is the chief architect of the autocephaly and independence of the Malankara Orthodox Church. Thirumeni strove tirelessly to uphold the right of the church of St Thomas in India for self-governance and heroically resisted all attempts to shackle that freedom, even at the risk of his own life. His single-minded devotion to the cause of defending the freedom and honour of the church earned him the title '*Sabha Bhasuran*' (illuminator of the church), an appellation that has never been given to anyone before or after. In recognition of his intensely pious life, the Holy Episcopal Synod canonised him as Saint of the Church in 2003. Despite his pressing preoccupations such as teaching in the Seminary and conducting unending court cases to uphold truth and independence of the church, he found time to write books for teaching the faithful of the church the basic tenets of the Orthodox Christian faith. '*Matopadesha Sarangal*' is undoubtedly his *magnum opus*. The book was written more than a century ago when our common people did not know much about the theological positions of our church.

We are indeed happy that M.O.C. Publications is bringing out an English translation of this classic work, particularly for the instruction of the younger generation of the day who are not familiar with the nuances of Malayalam. We place on record our great appreciation to all who are associated with the production of '*Matopadesha Sarangal*' in Malayalam, particularly His Grace Dr Yakob Mar Irenaios, our scholarly Metropolitan-brother who undertook the strenuous task of translation.

May the prayers and blessings of St Dionysius be with us all.



Baselios Marthoma Didymus I
Catholicos of the East & Malankara Metropolitan
Catholicate Aramana, Devalokam
November 30, 2006



TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND IN SACRED MEMORY OF
HIS GRACE THE MOST REV.
GEEVARGHESE MARDIONYSIUS
METROPOLITAN OF MALANKARA

1908-1934

BORN IN VATTASSERY FAMILY AT MALLAPPALLY
ON OCT. 31, 1858

ORDAINED DEACON BY H.H. PATRIARCH PETER III
ON OCT. 12, 1876

PRIEST BY H.G. MAR GREGORIUS OF PARUMALA
ON JAN. 18, 1880

CREATED MALPAN OF MALANKARA BY
H.H. PATRIARCH PETER III IN 1881

PROFESSED REMBAN BY H.G. MAR DIONYSIUS
ON NOV. 1 1903

CONSECREATED METROPOLITAN AT JERUSALEM
ON MAY 31, 1908.

ON SEP. 15, 1912. HE EFFECTED IN INDIA
THE RESTORATION OF THE CATHOLICATE OF THE EAST

THROUGH H.H. PATRIARCH ABDUL MESSIAH II

ENTERED ETERNAL REST ON FEB. 23, 1934.

Publishers' Note

It is with a consummate sense of fulfilment that MOC Publications bring out the English version of “*Matopadesha Sarangal*” (Basic Doctrines of the Church) written by Vattasseril Geevarghese Malpan (Saint Geevarghese Mar Dionysius), about a century ago. It was an ardent desire and resolve of MOC Publications to publish an English version of ‘*Basic Doctrines*’, ever since the Holy Father was canonized in 2003. Though initial moves on this venture started early, they got slowed down somewhere on the way. Meanwhile there were such widespread demands for this English version that the MOC Publications Board met again and gave the green signal for this volume.

So, now you have the first systematically prepared book in English, in India on the basic doctrines of the church, in your hands!. The first draft of the translation was prepared by Mr. Jose Kurian Puliyeril, a member of St. George Orthodox Cathedral, Abu Dhabi. We are really grateful to to him for his steadfast efforts. It was Most Rev. Dr. Yakob Mar Irenaios Metropolitan, the Vice President of MOC Publications, who completed the translation. We commend his effort and enthusiasm. We are deeply indebted to Prof. Jacob Kurian Onattu, Principal, K.G College, Pampady, for proof reading the entire text and suggesting necessary alterations. Thanks are also due to Rev. Fr. K.M.Zachariah, Secretary of MOC Publications, but for whose dedicated work, this book would not have been through the press so early and in this beautiful format.

St. Dionysius is the pride and honour of the Malankara Church. He stood as a one-man army against the historically indefensible onslaughts and ecclesiastical hegemony of the unthinking hierarchs of the Syrian Orthodox Church. The heroic Saint stood his ground, head and shoulders above all, as the defender of faith and standard bearer of the native independence of the Church of St. Thomas in India. The Patriarch and his henchmen created untold miseries for this ‘lion’ of Malankara, but the Saint never wavered. Like Bala Gangadhar Tilak, he would

declare, “freedom is my birthright”! He would not give in, even at the cost of his life, to the machinations of an over ambitious Patriarch to make a “vassal state” of the Malankara Church.

Preoccupied as he was by several pressing concerns of the church in those troubled times, it is surprising to note that the author had the time and strength to attempt at theological formulations like “*Basic Doctrines*”. In fact he had no model before him to rely on, in preparing this much useful “Guide to Faith”. The Church shall remember him for his great achievements, literary and ecclesiastical — ‘Basic Doctrines’, ‘Syriac Language Primer’, “Translation of Prayers for Easter Season”; for his heroic leadership in establishing the Catholicate of the East in India, and his prophetic vision in drafting the 1934 Constitution of the Malankara Church, which has been validated by the apex court of India.

However, the reader shall do well to keep in mind that “*Basic Doctrines*” was written before the establishment of the Catholicate in India, and when the author was still a Malpan (teacher) in the Seminary. It was also a time the Church was fighting ‘The Reformist group’, simultaneously nursing a kind of affinity and soft corner for the Syrian Orthodox hierarchs. Thus, no wonder, a few references could be identified in this book, which touches on admitting a kind of supervisory role for the Syrian Patriarch. But the author chose not to change these “aberrations” even after 1912, though he had revised his points of view substantially, later on. The scholarly introduction to this volume by His Grace Dr. Yakob Mar Irenaios would suffice to explain these issues in the most convincing manner.

May the prayers and blessings of St. Dionysius be with us!

Vattasseril Geevarghese Malpan
(St. Geevarghese Mar Dionysius)
Life History at a Glance

Mar Dionysius (baptismal name-Geevarghese) was born on 31 October, 1858, in the Pawothikunnel Vattasseril family at Mallappally, Pathanamthitta District, in Kerala State. His ancestors belonged to the famous “Pakalomattom” family, one of the families converted to Christianity by St. Thomas in the first century A.D. His parents were Joseph and Aleyamma. Geevarghese had his early education at C.M.S. Middle School, Mallappally. Later he became a student of C.M.S. High School, Kottayam. While he was still a High School student, he was ordained as a sub-deacon by the Antiochene Patriarch Peter III on October 12, 1876. Peter III was the first Syrian Patriarch to visit India; and in those days there was the practice of ordaining teenaged boys and then sending them for seminary education. Through this practice, the seminary aspirants used to get an orientation for the ministry and a clear direction in life. After passing out from the High School, deacon Geevarghese joined the Old Seminary (Orthodox Theological Seminary), Kottayam for his four year theological programme. During this time, the precocious youngster gained deep scholarship in Eastern Orthodox Theology and Christology. It was from Metropolitan Mar Gregorios of Parumala (St. Gregorios) that the deacon imbibed the Syriac language; and soon he attained a very high degree of proficiency in Syriac language.

On October 16, 1879 he was ordained full deacon and was ordained priest on January 8, 1880 by St. Mar Gregorios of Parumala. Meanwhile Geevarghese Kathanar became well known

as a great scholar in Syriac, Church History, the Bible, Canon Law and Theology. He was widely acknowledged as a genius as well as a pious christian. No wonder, this young priest, who was the darling of Parumala Thirumeni, was appointed as Malpan (Professor) in the Parumala Seminary and later in the Old Seminary, Kottayam. He was acclaimed as "Malankara Malpan Vattasseril Geevarghese Kathanar"-a veritable Gamaliel of Malankara! His premier publication, "*Matopadesha Sarangal*" (Basic Doctrines of the Church) which gives in a nutshell, the gist of the theological and canonical positions and traditions of the orthodox church, has the indelible stamp of his deep insight into the theological affirmations of the Oriental Orthodox Churches. It is said that the lecture notes which he prepared as a professor in the seminary came handy while giving shape to this book. Besides, the Malapan prepared and published a primer in Syriac language for the beginners. He and Konat Mathen Kathanar together published the prayer book for the Easter Season and a book of Oriental Liturgy.

This gem of a priest-Malpan was extraordinary in his scholarship as well as ascetic life. During this time, Geevarghese Malpan was appointed as Principal of M.D. Seminary and served in that capacity for a couple of years. Soon he was professed as Monk-Priest (Ramban) by the then Metropolitan of Malankara, Joseph Mar Dionysius, on 1 November 1903. He was already working as Manager of Parumala Seminary from 1878 onwards, and continued in that position till he was consecrated Metropolitan in 1908.

The church saw in this expert administrator, great visionary and strong-willed Ramban the future leader of the Malankara community. He was consecrated as Metropolitan along with Mar Coorilos. After his return to Malankara, he assisted the then Malankara Metropolitan Joseph Mar Dionysius, in the

administration of the whole church. Joseph Mar Dionysius was extremely happy to get such an able and dedicated leader as his successor. Joseph Mar Dionysius passed away in 1909, and the Malankara Association elected Vattasseril Mar Dionysius as the new Malankara Metropolitan.

What followed were the most trying years for Mar Dionysius and the Church. The Antiochene Patriarch, Abdulla II arrived in Malankara, and his misdeeds led to quarrels and a division in the Church. The Patriarch explored every means to wield full spiritual and temporal overlordship over the Malankara Church, and naturally there was stiff resistance from Mar Dionysius and patriotic members of the Church. However, a few people sided with the Patriarch in his misadventure. There were attempts to forcefully evict Mar Dionysius from the Old Seminary, which was his residence. Since the Metropolitan did not accept the uncanonical and unlawful acts of the Patriarch, he was unreasonably “excommunicated” by the Syrian Primate in 1911. This resulted in the division of the Malankara Church into two factions. However the law courts of the land ruled that the “excommunication” was unlawful and ineffective. Meanwhile there were attempts on the life of the Metropolitan, and sadly enough, one of his security men, Varkey Varghese Asan alias Ana Pappi, was brutally murdered.

On a request by the Malankara Church, the senior and canonical Patriarch of Antioch, Abdul Messiah arrived in Malankara in 1912. This Patriarch of blessed memory declared the excommunication of Mar Dionysius as null and void. With the help of this Patriarch, the throne and institution of Catholicate was established in Malankara in 1912. Two more Catholicoses were installed during the life time of Vattasseril Mar Dionysius.

The eventful life of Mar Dionysius came to an end on 23 February 1934 and the mortal remains were interred in the Old

Seminary Chapel. On 24 February 2003, Mar Dionysius was declared as a saint by the Holy Episcopal Synod of the Malankara Church. The major contributions of the heroic-saint Mar Dionysius were the establishment of the Catholicate in Malankara and the formulation of the 1934 constitution of the Church which, to this day, is the solid foundation of the edifice of church administration and its historical dignity.

An introduction

*“It is highly essential that those who belong to a religion should learn the faith and precepts of that religion.”**

It is with this general statement that Malpan Vattasseril Geevarghese Kathanar (St. Geevarghese Mar Dionysius) introduced the ‘gist’ of the Orthodox faith and practice in “*Matopadesha Sarangal*” (Basic Doctrines of the Church), a century ago. This scholarly presentation by the erudite Malpan addressed a crying need of the St. Thomas Christians—to have in the codified form the basic tenets and articles of faith of the Church. Rev. Dr. V.C. Samuel of blessed memory, the illustrious Malpan and author in the Malankara Church (1912-1998) called this handbook, “a praiseworthy manual.”

To put it briefly, the book furnishes the theological and faith positions of the Malankara church; and has proved an extremely useful and reliable guide to Orthodox faith, sacraments and traditions. Those were times when the time-tested doctrines and practices of the Malankara Church were challenged and shown in poor light by the “Reformist Group”, as being indefensively conventional and not supported by the Bible. This may be one of the “provocations” to bring out this volume, and also provide copious references from the Bible to establish and endorse almost everything the author presents in it.

* Vattasseril Geevarghese Kathanar: *Matopadesha Sarangal* (MGOCSM Centenary Publications, No. 1, Kottayam) Introduction. Page 5.

Lecture notes as genre

It is generally acknowledged that '*Basic Doctrines*' was an enlargement of the lecture notes prepared by the author for teaching in the seminary. The European teachers who were in the seminary had already left well ahead of his time, and there was no "virus" of affiliation to a Protestant Theological School; hence the Malpan had no hurdle in teaching the basic tenets of the orthodox faith freely to his students. With practically no embellishments, either in language or presentation, the author tries to impress upon the reader the "Truths" of the church in black and white, in the most direct and positive manner. The contents of the book bear a rare impress of the author, with absolutely no attempt to please. There are no dubious arguments, nor are there the displays of fanciful assumptions. Open the book, and there you are, "you get what you asked for!" Articles of faith and tenets presented directly are always endorsed with Bible verses. There is no attempt at arguing out things, or the senseless glee of maligning others by disproving them. This aspect, of course, is a reflection of a beautiful trait of the personality of the author, who always treated his opponents with respect, even while fighting them for the purpose of preserving the native freedom of his church, which he believed strongly, was its birthright.

Concise and pithy statements

It seems as though the author is in right earnest to accomplish his pronounced purpose, which he had declared in "brave clearness" as the aim of writing this book. He was not writing for the sake of it, to play in polemics, with a hidden intent to show off his scholarship and excellence. Nor is there an assay to "beat the heresy out of" an unwilling mind through forceful and credible arguments. In its unique presentation and minimal arguments, the contents of the book resemble the "The Ten Commandments"

and the “Beatitudes” with its pithy statements like the “couplets” in poetry, or the more recent ‘tiny’ poems of Kunjuni in Malayalam language. The objective of the author is to pass something across to the people; and he does it brilliantly, with the single minded concentration of the monk, and the intellectual honesty of the Eastern Christian theologian and teacher. So much so that the statements which look like finished products of gems could be endlessly elaborated for the benefit of scholarly minds and genuine students of theology. It is a pity that this line of work has not been taken up to the extent that it should be, by posterity! However, it is really creditable on the part of the author to leave it open for study and further elaboration by interested minds. To say the least, the presentation of the faith convictions are highly concentrated and systemic.

A response to the reformist onslaught

Although the formulation of faith and practice in the way it is presented is highly necessary for the church as a segment of its religious education programme, to confirm its children in the true faith, it seems there was an immediate cause or ‘provocation’ for the publication of this manual. The Protestant groups and ‘Reformist group’ (Mar Thoma Church) and their sympathisers were assailing the faith and practices of the Orthodox Church as ‘unbiblical’, ‘superstitious’ and ‘Hindu’. These perpetrators had the blessings and encouragement of the ‘Raj’; and some pliable minds thought that these allegations were relevant and the Reformers were more ‘open’ in their theological formulations and practices.

The Reformists used the printed word, as well as evangelical conventions to disseminate their arguments and points of view. Such onslaughts on the Orthodox faith had to be confronted, primarily by teaching and confirming the flocks at home. Exhorta-

tions, encyclicals, publications and convention-sermons were made use of as aids in this project. (Actually, the origins of large scale Bible conventions in the Orthodox church could be traced back to these turbulent times.) *'Matopadesha Sarangal'* could be reasonably reckoned and appreciated as a sincere and determined attempt at formulating and specifying the theological and faith positions of the orthodox church in credible Biblical settings. Maybe, the Malpan thought it part of his duty as a 'Rabbi' to defend and disseminate the fundamentals of faith by making use of the print media. The 'Reformists' always kept up the strain of "Bible alone" to advertise their points of view; and never forgot to rule out anything that goes under the banner of "Holy Tradition". As a "scribe who had become a disciple of the Kingdom of Heaven", the illustrious Malpan draws from the "old and the new" by introducing the teaching of the 'timeless' Doctors of the church; and at the same time endorsing every statement, drawing heavily from the Holy writ. Anyone genuinely interested in Orthodoxy may gather these pearls with conviction, as they are always based on the word of God. These references, (which the author chooses to call 'pointers') are a sure indication of his undisputed familiarity with, and deep knowledge of the Bible. The ease with which the timeless truths of Orthodoxy are codified in very simple language, and the direct presentation without a tinge of embellishment or circumvention, are really amazing!

'A mine of truths in a tiny casket'

* Z.M. Paret, church historian and critic who was also a great admirer of Vattasseril Mar Dionysius, has presented a brief assessment of "*Basic Doctrines*", the translation of which from the Malayalam original is given below.

* Z.M. Paret, "Vattasseril Mar Dionysius" (Malankara Nazranikal) Vol. IV, Kottayam, P.C. Press. P. 31

“The small book ‘*Matopadesha Sarangal*’ by Vattasseril Malpan eclipses all his other activities. Highly learned people have agreed that such a book can be written only by a very scholarly theologian; and they extol his deep scholarship even today. It is recalled here that one of the high ranking leaders of the Mar Thoma Church wrote in a recent article, that Metropolitan Geevarghese Mar Dionysius is the greatest theologian from South India in the first half of the 20th century.”

It is very improbable that Paret (who is generally stingy in doling out praise) would heap such encomiums on an undeserving candidate; and hence this testimony could be accepted and acclaimed as substantial and genuine!.

Formulation and codification of the major articles of the faith of the Holy Orthodox church in an Indian language is a feat unprecedented in the history of the Malankara Church. This all time record has not been ‘violated’ or broken to this day! In fact, such codified presentations have not been the norm and the present work seems to be the first attempt in that direction. And the credit for this unique enterprise goes to Vattasseril Malpan, who faced Herculean challenges in his ministry, besides serious threat to his very life. That a person of his stature and dignity, weighed down by heavy responsibilities, could sit down to prepare a manual of this kind, evinces extraordinary determination and will, and an enthusiasm to serve his community on intellectual-academic plane as well. In fact he was taking out the lessons he taught in the seminary, out of the “Nalukettu”, to the common man out there, who was, by and large, not much literate in the theological positions of the church. It is really surprising, as an aside, to know we could never boast of a systematic theological school for centuries!

It is not an easy task to formulate the basic Orthodox teachings and theological standpoints (of course, in contrast to the Roman and Protestant teachings) and present them in a small vol-

ume of the size of this book. Nonetheless, the illustrious Malpan succeeded in making a clean sweep, by bringing in all the ‘basic doctrines’, simultaneously analysing the arguments put forward by the Reformers, and at times venturing into the heights of philosophical explanations of theology. It is an accepted fact that the author, like many others in the Malankara Church of his day, never had opportunities to delve into the writings of the Fathers of the Byzantine and the Oriental churches. The major sources of the theological positions demonstrated in this book are largely pinned down to a few west syrian Fathers, may be due to their easy availability in Malankara through copying.

This attempt by the Malpan is unique in many respects, as he presents the doctrines with a certitude, which he draws faithfully from his available sources. The long list of heretics, little known in modern times, with brief notes about their heretical teachings, given at the end of book, has to be appreciated in this context.

The author’s preface

Much like the contents of the book, the author’s preface is short and succinct. Attempting at no show of ‘wit and wisdom’, the purpose of this book is stated in black and white. The sole professed aim is to provide a guide to the basic faith and teachings of the Orthodox Church, as understood by its leadership and academic community. There is clearly a dearth of books of this nature to teach the people. Here is a modest attempt to give a general understanding to the people in the basic doctrines of the Orthodox Church and confirm them in the true faith. It is acknowledged that some people have been attracted to other faiths, since books of their faith formulations have been available in plenty. The sources acknowledged by the author in preparing this book include Bar Hebraeus ‘Mnareskudsa’, ‘Salga’ and the Hoodaya Canon.

Contents

The first three chapters of the book constitute a brief exposition of the teaching of the undivided church regarding the Three Personed Holy Trinity. The next eight chapters deal with the basic meaning of the sacraments as understood and enunciated by the West Syrian fathers and also as presented in the 'Hoodaya Canon'. The Orthodox emphasis on prayer and fasting is given in individual sections. With profuse quotes from the Bible, the author seems to assume it as a mission to defend issues like observing the feasts of saints, intercession of Holy Virgin Mary and saints, prayer for the dead, deference to holy relics, and the like. He does not forget to present materials regarding celibacy and the issue of marriage and family life for priests.

Chapters 26-32 are a scholarly presentation of the theological positions which have been contentious issues between Eastern and Western Christianity, and also between the Orthodox and the Protestant churches. Chapter 33 gives the Canon of the books of the Bible. Here too he follows the West Syrian traditions.

It is interesting to note that while the presentation of the topics like 'Holy Trinity' takes less space in the book, certain others of interest are given longer slots. It seems the author does not intend to trespass into a scientific analysis of the mystery of the Holy Trinity, and so uses the language to a bare minimum. It could be reasonably concluded that issues like child baptism, intercession of saints, prayer for the dead etc. were hotly debated in those days as the Reformist movement assumed momentum.

The logical explanation for veneration of the Cross is direct, forceful and convincing: the explanation goes that the Cross we adore is not the cross made of wood, silver or gold. We form the likeness of God, who is unseen and formless, in our hearts.

We see Him with our spiritual eyes, and adore him. Much in the same way, we form the Cross of the Son of God in our hearts, see it with our spiritual eyes and adore it. When we bow and adore the Cross, we adore the crucifixion and death of our Lord.

There is also a reference to “*Janma papa*” (sin of birth) and “*Karma papa*” (sin of action). The former one, though accepted as a dogma by the Roman church, is not endorsed by the Orthodox church. However, it is too obvious that what the author meant is ‘original sin’ (P. 36); and there is absolutely no suggestion that birth is a sin.

The issue of *Justification* becomes much relevant in the context of the Protestant emphasis on ‘justification by faith’. It is explained that God does not discriminate in distributing his grace among humans. So man is justified not by faith alone, without works, or works alone, without faith, or by the free gift of grace alone. As a master stroke comes a definition from the author: “Justification is through free grace, by faith and action.” The explanation given for ‘foreknowledge’ and ‘predetermination’ is also significant and convincing. The concept of ‘transmigration of souls’ is rejected outright.

The following observation in the book throws light on the idea of human freedom. ‘God has given sharp intelligence to man; however man cannot do any good without the power of God.’

The handling of the topic of the Canon of the Bible is very simple, the author merely follows uncritically the leads in the west syrian tradition. There is absolutely no reference to other canons, or explanations why certain books are included or not. The reason for this ‘ease of conviction’ is obvious enough.

However, there appears no attempt to show off the scholarship of the author, his native genius, or the wisdom gained through his long teaching career and commendable proficiency in the Syriac

language. We may recall that “spiritual and scholarly exhibitionism” was something the hated like a plague!

There is an added dimension to the “*Basic Doctrines*”; his sworn opponents never ceased arguing that he had deviated from the true faith. This book is one of his responses to this baseless allegation.

‘Higher authority of Priesthood’

In the tenth chapter of the book, which specifically deals with priesthood and the authority of priesthood, there is a statement which might appear misleading, and providing ammunition to the constant arguments of his opponents—the syrian sympathisers. For the very reason, the undue interest of this group is likely to fall on this book, and especially focus on this particular statement. The statement reads as follows in translation:-

*“the higher authority of priesthood shall vest with the Patriarch Moran Mar Ignatius, who reigns on the throne of Antioch.”**

A causal, uncritical reading of the text may suggest that Vattaseril Malpan believed in the supremacy of the Syrian Patriarch in matters of ordination and priesthood for the Malankara Church. A considered explanation seems highly essential at this point:-

a) Since the arrival of the Syrian Patriarch, Peter III in Malankara, there has been a conscious attempt to make it out that the Syrian Patriarch has supreme authority over the Indian Church. His successor, Abdulla, claimed spiritual as well as temporal dominion over the Malankara Church, with no rhyme or reason, historical or canonical. It is crystal clear that it was a real

* Ibid, P-26.

shame on Malankara Church to keep quiet at the Mulanthuruthy Council, where the Patriarch made the council state that from time immemorial, the Malankara Church was under the jurisdiction of Syrian Patriarchs! This claim is a clear historical fallacy, and the Syrian hierarch had no right to put forward such a claim at all.

We may also pursue circumstantial reason for this “ecclesiastical aggression.” The Malankara Church found in the Syrian hierarch, a ‘partner’ or ‘leader’, in its strenuous struggle against the Reformist Movement. May be this is the reason why it did not resist the unjust demands of the Patriarch, while knowing full well that the move was unjust and unchristian. The so called first bishop of the Reformist party was consecrated by the Patriarch, without verifying the whereabouts and bonafides of the candidate, or referring the case to the Malankara Church. However, the justice of God never misses the target! The Patriarch who unauthorisedly consecrated Mathews Mar Athanasios had to come all the way to India to excommuicate him! Creation and annihilation from the same source as is wont with the Syrian hierarchs! Since the respected “partner” did the trick on the Reformists, a grateful Malankara Church seems to have accepted the spiritual authority of the Patriarch. Once this position was received in some form, obviously, there remained a group who strongly backed the claims of the syrian head of church.

b) There were two ecclesiastical elements, on the strength of which, the Syrian hierarchs thought they could intimidate and hold the Malankara Church to ransom—the consecration of bishops and the consecration of the Holy Chrism (Myron). Since the Persian connection had come to an abrupt end, following the Portuguese overlordship over sea routes, the Malankara Church was worried about these two religiously important elements. The arrival of the Syrian leaders was welcomed by the Malankara Church for this very reason. Thy Syrian hierarchs, with the help of local

henchmen manipulated the situation to their benefit, and made it seem that all ecclesiastical “authority and grace” flowed from Antioch alone!

c) ‘*Basic Doctrines*’ was written much before the establishment of the Catholicate in India. Since this institution was equal to the Patriarhal dignity, and was in place in India, no more the Malankara Church needed to go begging for consecrating bishops and for Holy Myron. (No wonder, later publishers of ‘*Basic Doctrines*’ thought it more meaningful to replace the reference to the Patriarch, with that of the Catholicos on the throne of the East. Though it is not justifiable to alter the material in a book, it gives a lead to the avowed position of the Malankara Church).

d) A question may arise, why Mar Dionysius himself had not altered this reference during his life time, after the establishment of the Catholicate?

It should never be forgotten that Mar Dionysius never wanted to sever all relationships with the Antiochene Church. However, this sisterly relationship shall be based on justice, canon law and historical realities. Then it becomes very clear why he had included in the very constitution (1934) of the church, some threads of relationship with the Syrian Head of church, of course, subject to the constitution. A telling example is the provision in the church constitution to invite the Antiochene Patriarch at the time of the installation of the Catholicos of the East, provided the Patriarch of the time is duly recognised by the Malankara Church. This very bylaw throws a lot of light into the thinking and mindset of Mar Dionysius regarding the independence of the Malankara Church and its relationship with the Antiochene Patriarch. There is no doubt that the author of ‘*Basic Doctrines*’ has travelled a long way since writing that book!

e) A deposition by Mar Dionysius in the court in the “Ex-communication case” in 1918 (1004 M.E.) appears highly rel-

evant in this context. The Metropolitan was asked whether he still holds the stated view in *Basic Doctrines* that the Patriarch is the higher authority regarding priesthood in the Malankara Church. The answer was in the affirmative. But the explanation given by the learned witness is highly relevant and significant. “The higher authority regarding priesthood is vested with the Patriarch, according to the lawful authority he has”. It is very clear from this, that Mar Dionysius is not ready to admit blanket authority for the Patriarch. “Lawful authority”—this qualification carries a world of meaning. Again, it is another proof that his views on the authority of the Syrian Patriarch was being revised and developed with the passage of time and events, especially the establishment of the Catholicate in India.

f) That Mar Dionysius was never willing to make an offering of the Malankara Church on a platter to the Syrian Patriarch is evident from the very beginning. It is true that for a while, people in Malankara accepted the Syrian Patriarch as the spiritual overseer. The real mind and intention of the Malpan is much evident as we carefully pursue the “*Basic Doctrines*”. The role of “Spiritual Overseer” given to or taken by the Patriarch, in the view of Malpan, was only too limited. The best evidence is what he says about the consecration of the Holy Chrism. In chapter nine, with the ease and simplicity of language, he writes that the Holy Chrism is consecrated by the “Chief Metropolitan”. Who is the Chief Metropolitan? It can be the Malankara Metropolitan or the Catholicos on the throne of St. Thomas (to be established in Malankara later) or even the Patriarch. This has to be read in juxtaposition to what the author says about priesthood in chapter ten.

g) That some of the stated positions in “*Basic Doctrines*” have undergone changes over the years is clear from the Malpan’s later acts, pronouncements and depositions in courts. These changes are not changes in faith, but positions relating to the na-

tive independence and dignity of the Malankara Church. The very fact that the Syrian Patriarch or any Patriarch for that matter was not invited to preside over the installation ceremony of the second and third Catholicoses in Malankara, while Mar Dianysius was still alive, speaks volumes about the real meaning of the statement made by the author in “*Basic Doctrines*”.

h) It is a historical fact that the Syrian Antiochene hierarchs, with the connivance of a group in Malankara, always dreamt and attempted to keep the church of St. Thomas as a vassal state. The author of “*Basic Doctrines*” would never allow that to materialise, even at the risk of his own life!

Rev. Dr. V. C. Samuel, in his monumental volume, “*Truth Triumphs*”, states with the erudition of a scholar par excellence and unbiased historian that “*Basic Doctrines*” does not reflect the final expression of Mar Dionysius theological and ecclesiastical positions; and that more mature thinking is seen in statements made in the court later.

Obvious limitations

Fr. Dr. V. C. Samuel, as a truly unbiased historian and critic gives significant insights into the strengths and limitations of “*Basic Doctrines*”. An important point made here is that by the time the Malpan had become the Malankara Metropolitan, his standpoints evinced more confidence and showed an advancement and further development over his earlier stated or written positions. But these are not at all to be seen as a shift in basic faith positions. Further study and experience, and the establishment of the Catholicate had given a rare acumen and level of maturity to his views and sharpened them. These advancements are best expressed in his long depositions in court cases.

(a) The emphases on the Church’s position on faith in the Holy Trinity has been consistent over the years. But all these

emphases have been interwoven with the theological and liturgical traditions of the Antiochene Syrian Churches. This tradition cannot be claimed to be complete in the light of the traditions that go back to the classical period.

- (b) Regarding the mystery of the Incarnation, Mar Dionysius said in the court that Roman Catholics confess two natures, two wills, two pursupa; but “Jacobite” church confesses one nature, one will and one pursupa in Christ.

However, as a critique, it must be said that the Roman, Anglican, and Byzantine Churches accept one person and one pursupa, or one person both outwardly and inwardly, two natures and two wills. Dr. V.C. Samuel comments that this is purely a west syrian outlook reflected in the Hoodaya canon.

It is quite interesting to note that Mar Dionysius said that the western church cannot be out of the sphere of christian salvation simply because they hold on to the ‘two natures’ theory. But he adds a rider that in the end they would lack ‘fullness’. In modern times, research and dialogues have thrown more light into this controversy, and today it is certainly possible to explain more about it. The position now agreed in principle, mainly due to the initiatives of Dr. V.C. Samuel is that the divergence of the two blocks in this matter could be settled. The churches are now showing signs of moving in that direction. The understanding today is that the two blocks hold the same faith essentially, and the difference is only in the use of their respective language.

- (d) On the issue of the “Procession of the Holy Spirit”, the official Orthodox position is expressed in the ‘*Basic Doctrines*’. However, the author gives an ecumenical dimension to the stated positions. He points out that for holding a

different view, the Roman Church cannot be judged as ineligible for salvation. “Never say others will not be saved” is the formula used. It is again interesting in this context to note that recently the Syrian Orthodox Church has entered into an understanding with the Roman church, despite the differing faith positions of the two churches.

It is seen that the author later tried to obtain the official position of the Roman and Anglican churches, regarding these affirmations.

At the time of the publication of *‘Basic Doctrines’*, the author seems to be more enthusiastic about promoting the traditions of the Antiochene Syrian Church, to the neglect of seeking and strengthening the selfhood and independence of the Malankara Church in the larger Indian context. However, this apparent ‘obsession’ is not much pronounced at later stages.

- (e) The author never proceeded beyond a few prominent Syrian fathers in the “*Doctrines*”. In all probability, he never had the opportunity to read and apply his mind on the views of Eastern fathers like Athanasios of Alexandria, Cappadocian scholars, Cyril of Alexandria, Severus of Antioch etc. which were classical. Besides, the author probably got precious little time to critically examine the church history of Bar Hebraeus, to which he gives undue importance. This must have been largely due to his official preoccupations and the legal tangles he got involved in.

The limitations identified here are not a reflection of any incompetence on the part of the author. The ‘atmosphere’ in the Malankara Church was such in those days that he could not go beyond a few available sources at the early stage of his ministry. However, the development of the mature personality of the author is seen in his superb analysis of the authority of the Syrian

Patriarch in India, his interest in the relevance of ecumenism, and his vision regarding the future growth of the Malankara Church. This is clear evidence that he had already elaborated some of his earlier ecclesiastical emphases.

In modern times, it is a welcome sign that those who opposed the author as Malpan and later as Malankara Metropolitan, have started to show more interest in this gem of a man and his writings. It is hoped that they, along with others, will not fail to appreciate what the saint stood for and suffered for, and the heroic and relentless fight he put up to save the honour and native independence of his Mother Church from the hegemonic designs of the selfish and unjust Antiochene hierarchs. A dispassionate study of the ecclesiastic hegemony of the syrian patriarchs, and the heroism of St. Dionysius will beat the negative attitude of “Dionysius - baiters” out of their minds. It is recommended that “*Basic Doctrines*” be read in juxtaposition with “*Nityakshrangal*” by Z. M. Paret . A better appreciation of the life and contributions of St. Dionysius will surely auger well for the Malankara church founded by St. Thomas in India.

Dr. Yakob Mar Irenaios Metropolitan

Kottayam

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Chapter 1

ABOUT THE HOLY TRINITY

(1) There is only one God, who is life and truth, the creator of everything visible and invisible. (2) There is no other God than the One God, who is the original cause of everything. (3) He is without beginning and is eternal. (4) He is incorporeal and cannot be seen by eyes of the flesh, and is omnipotent. (5) omniscient. (6) omnipresent. (7) perfect in goodness. (8) inconceivable.

(1) Gen. 1:1 In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth. Isa. 44: 24 I am the Lord who made all things. Deu. 5:26. For who is there of all flesh that has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of fire, as we have, and remains alive? 1 John 5:20. And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. Dan. 2:8. The king answered, "I know with certainty that you are trying to gain time, because you see I have firmly decreed."

(2) Isa. 43:11. I, I am the Lord, and besides me there is no savior. Isa. 45: 5,6. I am the Lord and there is no other; besides me there is no god. I am you, though you do not know me.....I am the Lord and there is no other.

(3) Isa. 41: 4. I, the Lord, am first, and will be with the last. Isa. 43: 10. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me.

(4) John 4:24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth. 1 Tim. 6:16. whom no one has ever seen or can see

(5) Matthew 19:26. But for God all things are possible. Luke 1:37. For nothing will be impossible with God. Pslams 147:5 his understanding is beyond measure.

(6) Pslams 139: 7 Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?

(7) Ex. 34:6 The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

(8) Job 11:7. Can you find out the deep things of God?

(9) is without change. (10) and is ruler of everything. (11) There are three personalities in Godhead—the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. (12) That is, one in three and three in one. Between the three persons there is no variation as regards seniority, stature or strength. They have one essence, one kingship, one nature, one will, one thinking, one power, one glory and one leadership.

Chapter 2

ABOUT THE FATHER

1) God the Father, who is one among the Holy Trinity is omnipotent. (2) creator of heaven and earth; as well as everything visible and invisible, begetter of the eternal Son, the Word, who was born of Him; and is perfect with all the attributes of God.

(9) Jam. 1: 17. Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

(10) Luke 10:21. “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth.”

(11) Gen.1:26. Then God says: “Let us make humankind in our image according to our likeness.” Matthew 28:19. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Gen.11:7. Matthew 3: 16,17.

(12) Isa. 6:3 And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.”

Chapter 2

(1) John 10:29. What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father’s hand.

(2) I Cor. 8:6 The Father from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

Chapter 3

ABOUT THE SON

(1) The Word and Son of the Father, one among the Holy Trinity, was born eternally from the Father, (2) is one is Essence with the father and the Holy Spirit, and is uncreated. (3) The Son, without any change in His Godly estate, by His will and the will of His Father and the Holy spirit, took flesh from the holy virgin, and became man, for the salvation of men (4) truly suffered in the flesh, (5) was crucified, (6) and died, (7) was buried (8) descended into hell and preached the good news to those who were there;(9) rose from the dead on the third day. (10) On the 40th day after Resurrection, He ascended into Heaven, and sat on the right side of His Father. That He became Man, does not mean that He dwelt in a righteous man born of a virgin, (11) on the other hand,

Chapter 3

(1) John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1: 14. We have seen his glory, the glory as of Father's only Son.

(2) John 10:30 The Father and I are one.

(3) Mala. 3: 6. For I the Lord do not change Heb. 2:14 Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things. John 1:14. And the Word became flesh and lived among us.

(4) Act. 1:3 After his sufferings.....

(5) Mark. 15:24 And they crucified him.....

(6) Roam. 5:6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

(7) 1 Cor. 15:4 and that he was buried.....

(8) 1 Peter 3:19 he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison.

(9) Act. 2:32. This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us witness. Luke 24:39 Look at my hands and feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.

(10) Luke. 24:51 While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven.

(11) Heb. 2:16 For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the

that, He who is truly God, took flesh from the virgin without contact with man, by the Holy Spirit, and became truly man. (12) Without Godly nature changing to become human nature, without human nature changing to become Godly nature, or both getting mixed up, or uniting to become another substance, or one getting annihilated by the other, the two natures, Godhead and Manhood, with perfect characteristics of both, except sin, were united, never again to be separated. This union is a great mystery. (13) After the union, there can be no separation into two natures or two personalities. But, one nature, one person, one pursupa (face)*, one will and one operation. He is perfect God and perfect man. When the spirit got separated from the body at the time of His death, (14) His Godhead without getting separated from the spirit and body, dwelt with both of them! (15) Because His Body was made incorruptible at Resurrection, never again have

descendants of Abraham. John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and lived among us. Isa. 7:14 Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall be named Immanuel.

(12) Col. 2:9 For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily. Heb. 2:9 so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. Tit. 2:13 while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. 1 Tim. 3:16 Without any doubt, the mystery of our religion is great. He was revealed in flesh, vindicated in spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among gentiles, believed in through the world, taken up in glory. Heb. 1:2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son.

(13) Eph. 4:5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism 1 Cor. 1:13 Has Christ been divided?

(14) John 19:34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out.

* Pursupa or 'face' here does not mean the human face, But an image that can be visualised in the mind.

(15) Rom. 6:9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.

death or suffering authority over Him. (16) He is the way, the Truth and the Life. Without Him nobody is saved. (17) He will come again in His glory to judge the living and the dead.

Chapter 4 ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

(1) The Holy Spirit, the comforter and one among the Holy Trinity is co-equal to the Father and Son, uncreated and eternal. (2) He proceeds from the Father, (3) takes from the Son, is adored and glorified along with the Father and the Son. (4) And spoke through the prophets and the Apostles.

(16) John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Act. 4:12 There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.

(17) Act. 17:31 because he has fixed a day on which, he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed.

Chapter 4

(1) 2 Cor. 3:18. We are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit. 2 Cor. 13:13. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

(2) John 15:26 "When the Advocate comes whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf."

(3) John 16:14 He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

(4) 2 Peter 1:21 because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. Matthew 10:20 for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Chapter 5

ABOUT THE HOLY SACRAMENTS

Sacraments are the visible operations of invisible graces, ordained and instituted by our Lord, which are necessary for the salvation of mankind. These are also called Divine Mysteries.

Among the seven Sacraments (1) Baptism, (2) Holy Qurbana, (3) Confession, (4) Chrismation, (5) Priesthood (Ordination), (6) Matrimony and (7) Anointing the sick, (8) five are intended for all the faithful, and other two, priesthood and matrimony, are only for those who want to have them. The Sacraments are to be received with the appropriate preparation and eligibility for each of them. Those who received them thus, will get the grace of God, and also increase the grace in them.

Chapter 5

(1) John 3:5 no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.

(2) John 6:53 So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you."

(3) James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed.

(4) 1 John 2:27 As for you, the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and so you do not need anyone to teach you.

(5) Heb. 5:4 And one does not presume to take this honor, but takes it only when called by God, just as Aaron was.

(6) Matthew 19:6 Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.

(7) James 5:14 Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord.

(8) Num. 8: 1,2 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to Aaron and say to him: When you set up the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front of the lampstand. Num.4.2

Chapter 6

ABOUT HOLY BAPTISM

Baptism is the first among the Sacraments. Other sacraments shall not be received before receiving Holy Baptism. (1) Through baptism, one gets sonship (of God) and becomes eligible for remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. (3) And for the fellowship in the company of the children of God. (4) But sacraments like baptism shall be received with devotion and faith; (5) because, sonship and love of God are obtained through faith. (6) Things like Chrism, olive oil and water which are used in sacraments like baptism, actions like making the baptizand confess

Chapter 6

(1) Gal. 3:27 As many of you as were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 29. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise. John 3:5

(2) Act. 22:16. And now why do you delay? Get up, be baptized, and have your sins washed away, calling on his name. Act. 2:38 "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of Holy Spirit."

(3) 1 Cor. 12:13 For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

(4) Act. 8:36, 38 and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! what is to prevent me from being baptised?" and then Philip baptized him.

(5) Gal. 3:26. for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith.

(6) Rom. 6: 3,4. Do you not know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 1 Peter 3:21. And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. John 20:22. When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "receive the Holy Spirit." John 13: 14,15. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an

the faith, laying of hands, breathing on the candidate, making the sign of the cross on the forehead etc. signify the graces which are received from God, and also things we are obliged to believe in and act upon, and those things that Christ did, as well as the invisible operations of the Spirit of God. This is called “Mamoodeeso” (baptism) which means ‘bathing’ or ‘washing’, because those who receive baptism with true faith and devotion are washed clean of defilements, with water. (7) It is also called “light”, since, by this, one is made to move from darkness of ignorance, and approach the divine light. (8) Baptism is also called ‘rebirth’, since those who are born again from the womb of baptism, are children of grace. Since all humanity is condemned to punishment by God, not only due to sins of actions, but also due to the original sin; and that forgiveness of sins and grace of God are obtained through baptism. (9) The grace of baptism shall not be denied to little children. There shall be an assigned mediator in baptism for the following purposes—to show their deep desire for the salvation of children, to stand as representatives of children and to do things like confession of faith on their behalf, in the baptism of little children, to be persons responsible to teach children true faith and

example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Act. 8:17. Then Peter and John laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

(7) 1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

(8) John 3:3. no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above. Tit.3:5. but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

(9) Mark. 10:13,14,16. People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.” And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them. Gen.17:10-14.

the like. (10) There is only one baptism for the remission of sins. therefore, if a person, after being baptised, forsakes his faith in Christ, but later believes and comes back, it is not necessary to baptise him once again. He should be received back solely on the basis of his repentance. However, the baptism conducted by heretics who have discarded the true faith of the Church, and those who do not have the lawful laying of hands in ordination, is to be reckoned as lacking perfection. Instead, as prescribed in the Hoodaya Canon, the faith position of each heretic shall be examined, and accordingly, some are only to be anointed with Chrism, with the prayers of anointing with oil; some others are only to be made to abjure their heresy; and some others are to be baptised using the entire order of service.

Chapter 7

ABOUT THE HOLY QURBANA (EUCCHARIST)

Holy Qurbana is the Sacrament that makes us partake in The Holy Body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ as food and drink, for the well being and salvation of our souls. (1) Because the Word united with human nature, just as His humanity is called "God", the Holy Spirit dwells in the bread and wine offered in the Holy Qurbana, (2) Therefore it is to be believed that they are the Holy Body and Blood of the Lord, according to His command

(10) Eph. 4:5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism.

Chapter 7

(1) Heb. 2:9. so that by the Grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

(2) Mark. 14:22-23. While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body" Then he took up a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many." John 6:55. for my flesh is true

that ‘this is My Body, and this is My Blood’, (3) Though the substance does not change in sight and taste, to become the Holy Body and Blood, (4) those who receive them with faith and devotion get remission of sins and eternal life as the fruit of the Holy Body and Blood of our Lord. (5) But those who partake of it, without discrimination and devotion shall be condemned (6) It is not only that the Holy Qurbana is participation in the Holy Body and the Blood of Jesus, (7) but also it is a sacrifice and offering

food and my blood is true drink. Matthew 26: 26-28. Luke.22: 19, 20. 1 Cor. 11: 24-29.

(3) 1 Cor. 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

(4) 1 Cor. 11:28 Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. Matthew 26:28. for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. John 6:51,53,54,56,57 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh”. So Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.” Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me.

(5) 1 Cor. 11:29-30 For all who eat and drink without discerning the body eat and drink judgement against themselves. For this reason many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.

(6) 1 Cor.10:16. The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?

(7) Mal.1:11. For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering; for my name is great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts. Matthew 5:23,24 So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother and sister and then come and offer your gift. Eph. 5:2. Christ

according to the New Testament. (8) This sacrifice is more fruitful and glorious than sacrifices according to the Law and Old Testament like blood offerings which foreshowed that the one sacrifice of Christ is to take place.

(9) By this, it is shown that the sacrifice of Christ, for the sake of the salvation of the world has been accomplished; and it recalls his birth, public ministry, death, burial, resurrection etc. The articles like bread, wine, Tablet (portable Altar) etc; used in the Holy Qurbana and actions like fraction (breaking of the bread) and elevation of mysteries, symbolise the articles and actions used by Christ in His one and only sacrifice. It is not authorised to give Body alone, or Blood alone to the people, without the 'fraction' service in which Body and Blood are mixed. (10) Since through the service of fraction, Blood is mixed in the Body and Body is mixed in the Blood, Qurbana can be dispensed either from the cup or from the chalice; and it is unnecessary to give twice, since Body and Blood are there in both. Those who receive the Holy Qurbana shall take Holy Confession sincerely, and receive it with

loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

(8) Heb. 10:1 Since the law was only a shadow of the good things to come and not the true form of these realities. Heb.9:13,14 For if the blood of goats and bulls, with the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God!

(9) Luke. 22:19. Do this in remembrance of me. 1 Cor. 11: 20,24-26.

(10) Rom. 6:9. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. Isa. 6:6-7 Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: "Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out." John 6:51.

true faith, devotion and prayer, and also preparing oneself with fasting, for the honour of the Holy Qurbana. (11) The bread that is used in the Holy Qurbana must be leavened, just as the bread used by Christ in his last supper was leavened. (12) Thus, through this, it is shown that Christ is the leaven that gives life to the whole world.

Chapter 8

ABOUT HOLY CONFESSION

Confession is a sacrament in which we receive remission of sins through repentance before God, by confessing our sins before the priest, who is the representative of God. It is also known as the sacrament (mystery) of repentance (1) It is right and becoming on the part of priests, as representatives of God, to preach to the people, correct them, admonish them about their open sins, and lead them in the path of righteousness. Besides, as far as possible, the priest should try to know their activities, and also

(11) Mark. 14:22. While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread. 1 Cor. 5:8 Therefore, let us celebrate the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

(12) Matthew 13:33. He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."*

* The syriac word "Amineera" here used for bread, is used for bread made with leavened dough, and not for making bread with unleavened bread (Patheera).

Chapter 8

(1) Mal. 2:7 For the lips of the priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. Isa 3:17-21 Mortal, I have made you a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. If I say to the wicked, "You shall surely die" and you give them no warning, or speak to warn the wicked from their wicked

their inner spiritual condition, and give each of them the necessary counsel, and save them from their wrong ways. The priest shall admonish the people about their sins sympathetically like a loving father. They shall prescribe appropriate amends to be made by the people for their sins, like fasting, giving alms and the like; they should tell the people and make them fear the justice of God, comfort them by making them depend on God's grace by telling them about His mercy, (2) saying on them the prayer of absolution, and bless them. For priests to do these things, it is necessary to know about the activities and inner condition of each person. (3) Those who made their confession should reveal to the priest, all their sins, and the state of their conscience. (4) The priest should never reveal to any one, the sins revealed to him. Any priest who violates this and reveals them, shall be liable

way, in order to save their life.....etc. Tit. 1:9 He must have a firm grasp of the word that is trustworthy in accordance with the teaching, so that he may be able both to preach with sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict it. 1 Tim. 5:20 As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest also may stand in fear.

(2) Lev. 5:5-6 When you realize your guilt in any of these, you shall confess the sin that you have committed. And you shall bring to the Lord, as your penalty for the sin that you have committed etc. and the priest shall make atonement on your behalf for your sin.

(3) Deu. 26:3-3-10. You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him,.....etc. Psal. 111:1. I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation. Matthew 3:6 and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Matthew 8:4 Then Jesus said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." Act. 19:18 Also many of those who became believers confessed and disclosed their practices. James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. Num. 5:6,7 Lev.13. Pro.28:13

(4) Pro. 11:13 A gossip goes about telling secrets, but one who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a confidence. Pro. 25:9. Argue your case with your neighbour directly, and do not disclose another's secret.

for condemnation and punishment. (5) Priests do not acquire the authority to forgive sins by their own righteousness or their own power. (6) They pronounce forgiveness of sins by their advice, (7) by their prayers and by the grace they have received from the Lord. If it is right to say that the woman resurrected by the Lord by the prayer of Peter, was resurrected by Peter, then it is equally right to say about the Lord forgiving sins through confession and other sacraments, that the priests have authority to forgive sins. This agrees with the command of the Lord, "If you forgive someone his sins, he shall be forgiven," and shall not amount to blasphemy.

Chapter 9 ABOUT HOLY OILS

It is necessary that (1) we put on Christ in baptism, (2) be born again from water and Holy Spirit, (3) and be anointed

(5) Act. 3:12. When Peter saw it, he addressed the people. "You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk?"

(6) James 5:19, 20. My brothers and sisters, if any one among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner's soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

(7) 1 Tit. 2:1,2 First of all, then, I urge that supplication and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and dignity.

(8) John 20, 22,23 When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven: if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." 1 Tim. 4:14 Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy with the laying on of hands by the council of elders.

Chapter 9

(1) Gal. 3:27 As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

(2) John 3:5 No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit.

(3) Eph. 1:13, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.

by him and sealed for life. (4) Therefore, as the sign of these things, it is necessary to be anointed and sealed by holy Chrism and consecrated olive oil. Holy Chrism, which is consecrated by the Chief Metropolitan alone is used in baptism and also in the consecration of churches and tablets (Portable Altars). The olive oil sanctified by the bishops is also used in baptism. The use of these holy oils teaches us that we are to put on Christ and are to be reborn by the Holy Spirit, and that we be sealed for life; It also shows us by action that it is being done so. When it is used in this way, they should be used with faith and devotion that they become effective in the spirit too.

Chapter 10

ABOUT THE HOLY ORDERS

Priests are the guides to transform worldly people to be heavenly, and those with animal nature to be of Godly nature.

(1) They are the ambassadors of the unseen (2) God and the ministers of the Holy sacraments entrusted to the church by God. (3) No one can take this position upon himself on his own.

(4) Ex. 30:22-33 The Lord spoke to Moses: Take the finest spices: of liquid myrrh five hundred shekels..... Whoever compounds any like it or whoever puts any of it on an unqualified person shall be cut off from the people. Song of Songs 3:6. What is that coming up from the wilderness, like a column of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all the fragrant powders of the merchant? 1 John 2:27 As for you, the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and so you do not need anyone to teach you.

Chapter 10

(1) 2 Cor. 5:20 So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

(2) Act. 6:4 while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.

(3) Heb. 5:4 And one does not presume to take this honour, but takes it only when called by God, just as Aaron was.

(4) It shall be only for those chosen according to the will of God, and who receives the laying of hands from Christ. (5) Without the laying of hands according to this, and the necessary permission, no one has the authority to minister in the church or to preach publicly. The higher authority for the holy orders shall vest with the Patriarch Moran Mar Ignatius, who reigns on the throne of Antioch. (6) Those who belong to the holy orders, as long as they are not ousted or excommunicated by councils (synods) or by their respective higher (spiritual) authorities, though they are ineligible, nobody can doubt about the fruits of the sacraments ministered by them or refrain from participating in them.

Because, they have (7) the holy anointment in them, and because the sacraments are ministered unto by them in the name of Christ, and because the fruits of the sacraments do not depend on the righteousness of the priest who ministers unto them, those who participate in them with pure conscience and true faith, get their benefits. However for those priests who minister unto them in an unholy and unbecoming manner, they shall be for

(4) 1 Tit. 4:14 Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy with the laying on of hands by the council of elders. John 20: 22,23, Act. 12:2,3. 2 Tim. 2:2, Tit. 1:5

(5) Jer. 23:21 I did not send the prophets, yet they ran: I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied.

(6) Matthew 23:2,3 "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practise what they teach."

(7) Levi. 21:12. The consecration of the anointing oil of his God is upon him Matthew 7:22,23. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?' Then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; go away from me, you evil doers.'

condemnation and punishment. (8) However, those who are seen as evil, shall be excommunicated, after which they shall not administer any sacraments; and the faithful laity shall not partake with those who defy and administer sacraments.

Chapter 11

ABOUT MARRIAGE

Marriage is a holy sacrament that binds man and woman, binds them inseparably and unites them spiritually, and gives them and their children blessings and graces from God.

(1) Marriage is good. (2) Marriage should not be denied to anyone. (3) However, no one has the right to marry another woman, when his lawful wife is alive, or to divorce his wife for any reasons other than those stipulated in the 'Hoodaya' canon, approved by the church, or to marry, violating the provisions given in the canon law. (4) Marriage is not merely an agreement; (5) It is a sacrament, and because it is by God that a woman in

(8) Matthew 18:17 If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as Gentile and a tax collector. 1 Cor. 5:11

Chapter 11

(1) Heb. 13:4 Let marriage be held in honour by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers.

(2) 1 Tim. 4:3 They forbid marriage and demand abstinence from foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

(3) Matthew 19: 4-9 He answered, "Have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female.....etc.'" Levi. 18

(4) Rom. 7:2 Thus a married woman is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies, she is discharged from the law concerning the husband.

arranged for marriage to man, and they become one flesh, marriage shall not be conducted without a priest, who is the representative of God.

Chapter 12

ABOUT ANOINTMENT OF THE SICK

(1) It is necessary that one should pray for another. (2) Also to carry burdens mutually. (3) To pray especially for the sick; and for priests, through their counsels to make the sick, courageous in spirit; to pray for their healing in body and spirit and to anoint them with olive oil.

This oil, called 'the oil of grace', which is sanctified by bishops, or by priests who are permitted to bless olive oil, as per the "Order of Kantheela" (order of anointing the sick) is applied on the sick, is effective in making the sick courageous enough to win over the temptation of Satan, and to show that they have renounced worldly ambitions, and their spirits have been anointed with the oil of the grace of the Lord. It can also be a means of healing, if the Lord wills.

(5) Matthew 19:6 Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate. Prov. 19:14. A prudent wife is from the Lord.

Chapter 12

(1) James 5:16 And pray for one another. 1 Thes. 1:2. We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly.

(2) Gal. 6:2 Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

(3) James 5:14, 15 Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. Mark. 6:13. They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

Chapter 13

ABOUT BURIAL OF THE DEAD

For whatever man does by way of good or evil, while he lives in his body, he shall receive rewards or punishment in his body, (1) with a changed nature, after resurrection. Therefore it is unbecoming to bury the bodies of the deceased without prayers and other services, as if they are of animals. Instead, (2) since we have hope of resurrection, (3) the bishops, priests, the religious, lay people etc. shall be buried, according to their stature, with prayers and services as ordained in the church. Great interest and devotion shall be shown in burying the dead. In the same way, if the children of christian parents die without being baptised, they shall be buried with prayers, since they are the children of the faithful.

Chapter 14

ABOUT PRAYER

Prayer is human beings' coming to realise their Creator, and the good things that they receive from Him and praise Him, doing His will, raising their hearts to God the creator, to have

Chapter 13

(1) 1 Cor. 15:53 For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 2 Cor. 5:10. For all of us must appear before the judgement seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

(2) 1 Thes. 4:13. But we do not want you to be uniformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.

(3) Eccl. 6:3 A man may beget a hundred children, and live many years; but however many are the days of his years, if he does not enjoy life's good things, or has no burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he. 2 Sam. 2:5 David sent messengers to the people of Jabesh-gil and said to them, "May you be blessed by the Lord because you showed this loyalty to Saul your lord, and buried him!" Acts. 8:2.

communion with Him, in order to ask and secure from him those things which are needed for the salvation of their souls and the well being of the body. Those prayers which are approved and used in the Church, prepared by the holy fathers for use in prayers, for each day and the canonical hours, are usually called the common (public) prayer.

Whereas each person expressing gratefulness for the good that they receive from God, and entreating for their personal needs is called private prayer.

(1) Both these ways of prayer shall be done with devotion and faith. (2) It is most appropriate to do the common public prayer in churches; and if it is not possible, to do them in houses, with all the people who can assemble there. (3) According to the command of our Lord, and as ordained in the canon law and the order of services in the church, prayers shall be regularly said standing, and also prostrating; and kneeling on occasions like confession, ordination, Pentecost Sunday service. Since it is not lawful to kneel and worship on Sundays and other festival days of the Lord; and also during the days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday, it shall be done accordingly.

Chapter 14

(1) James 1.6,7,8. But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind: for the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Matthew 21:22. Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive.

(2) Acts. 3:1 One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon. Matthew 18:20. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.

(3) Mark. 11: 25. "Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses." Luke. 18:10-13 Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus.....etc.

Chapter 15

ABOUT FASTING

(1) Fasting is the first command given by God to Adam, (2) which was observed in the Jewish church, as per the command of God, (3) what our Lord commanded, observed and taught (4) what his disciples used to observe, and what is ordained and confirmed and has been in vogue in the church. (5) However, it is not enough to fast in the body alone, renouncing food, but fasting shall be in the spirit as well, by keeping away from evil. (6) The aim of fasting is to teach that spiritual things are more valuable than bodily things, to enrich the spirit by overpowering bodily desires; to deny bodily desires and awaken the spirit to godly things, and that it shall be a weapon to defeat Satan. Since love of appetite is the mother of numerous sins, fasting is an effective means to curb the sins that originate from it. (7) Therefore, Wednesday and Friday are to be observed as fasting days every

Chapter 15

(1) Gen. 2:17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.

(2) Joel 2:12. Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Zach. 7:5-8.

(3) Matthew 4:2 He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. Matthew 9:15 The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.

(4) Acts. 13:2. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

(5) Matthew 6:16 "And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting."

(6) Phil. 3:19. Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. Matthew 17:21 But this kind does not come out except by prayer and fasting.

(7) Luke; 18:12. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.

week; besides, the fifty days' lent, including the Passion Week, twenty five days' lent, fifteen days' lent, apostles' Lent, three days' (Ninevah) lent are the five fasting seasons ordained in the church. During these days, (8) conjugal relationships, eating of fish and meat, and the like are to be renounced; and practices like eating one meal a day, fasting till noon shall be observed according to the ability of each person and the ordinances of the church.

Chapter 16

ABOUT SUNDAYS AND FESTIVAL DAYS

(MARANAYA FESTIVALS)

The holy Apostles and the fathers of the church have decreed that, Sundays which commemorate the resurrection of our Lord, His miracles (mighty works), the sanctification of the church etc; and the days fixed as 'Maranaya' (important) festivals in commemoration of his birth, baptism, presentation in the temple etc. (1) shall be observed with great devotion and respect. On these days, we shall keep away from worldly pursuits, and get involved in spiritual activities like Holy Qurbana, Bible reading, singing divine hymns etc. (2) These holy days shall be observed in the Christian tradition, and not according to the Jewish or gentile traditions, and these days shall not be spent without participating in spiritual activities and whiling away the time in a slothful manner.

(8) 1 Cor. 7:5 Do not deprive one another except perhaps by agreement for a set time, to devote yourselves to prayer, and then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 2 Sam. 1:12 Daniel 1:8

Chapter 16

(1) 1 Cor. 11:20 When you come together, it is not really to eat the Lord's supper. Acts. 20:7-16

(2) 1 Cor. 5:8 Therefore, let us celebrate the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Colo. 2:16

Chapter 17

ABOUT THE MEMORIAL DAYS OF SAINTS

(1) It is our duty and the right thing to do, to observe the memorial days of the Mother of God, Apostles, Martyrs, and saintly men and women. (2) Their memory shall be a blessing, and their prayers a great help for us. Except for those days fixed to be observed as 'Maranaya' festivals, on these memorial days, though it is not mandatory to keep away from worldly pursuits, (3) we shall try to meditate on the firm and deep faith of the saints, and follow their foot steps.

Chapter 18

ABOUT THE MOTHER OF GOD

(1) Because, with the annunciation by the angel, God the Word, was conceived in the womb of the virgin, and Godhead and manhood were united inseparably in the womb itself; and the virgin gave birth to Emmanuel, (2) perfect God and perfect Man,

Chapter 17

(1) Judges 11:40 for four days every year the daughters of Israel would go out to lament the daughter of Jeph'thah the Gil'eadite. Psal. 112:6 Matthew 23:29, Luke. 1:48.

(2) Proverbs 10:7 The memory of the righteous is a blessing.

(3) Hew. 13:7 Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Heb. 6:12

Chapter 18

(1) Luke. 1:35 The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God."

(2) Isa. 7:14. Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.

(3) the virgin shall be called “Mother of God”, Because the holy virgin became eligible that her womb became the throne of the Son of God, (4) She remains virgin for ever, without knowing a man. (5) We have to call her ‘blessed’ following the words of the angel, and desire especially for her prayers.

Chapter 19

ABOUT PRAYERS TO THE SAINTS

(1) Since the departed saints are living in spirit, (2) it is meet that we respect and love them as we do the living saints for the sake of Christ. Because they are the beloved of Christ, when we respect and love them, we are actually respecting and loving our Lord. (3) The children of early fathers like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who were the beloved of God, remembered theirs, and

(3) Luke. 1:43. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me?

(4) John 19:26-27. “Woman, here is your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from that hour, the disciple took her into his own home. Eze. 44:1-3

(5) Luke. 1: 28, 48. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.” For he has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed.

Chapter 19

(1) Luke. 20:38. Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them are alive. 1 Peter 3:19. He went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison.

(2) Matthew 10:40, 41 “Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous.”

(3) Deut. 9: 27 Remember your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; pay no attention to the stubbornness of this people, their wickedness and their sin. Isa 37:35. For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.

prayed to God “Lord, have mercy on us for their sake.” God listened to their prayers and granted their petition. In the same manner, it is good and acceptable before God, that we remember the saints who begot us in spirit, showed us the path of life, and shed their blood for the sake of Christ; and pray to God, “have mercy on us for their sake.” (4) Because death is only the separation of body and spirit and not something that annihilates the spirit; and (5) Since the spirits of saints, with the grace of the Holy Spirit; which God has endowed them with, sit in the (6) place of happiness and (7) praise the Lord like angels, and wish and pray for the salvation of the people of their world. It is beneficial for us to pray to such saints saying, “You pray to the Lord for our sakes.”

(4) Psal. 13:4 And my enemy will say, “I have prevailed”; my foes will rejoice because I am shaken. Ecc. 12:7 And the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the breath returns to God who gave it. John 8:51. Very truly, I tell you, whoever keeps my word will never see death.

(5) John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever.

(6) Luke. 23: 43. He replied, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise.” Phil. 1:21, 23 For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.

(7) Job 16:19-20 Even now, in fact, my witness is in heaven, and he that vouches for me is on high. My friends scorn me: my eyes pour out tears to God. Psal. 30:12 So that my soul may praise you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever. Psal. 115:17-18. The dead do not praise the Lord, nor do any that go down into silence. But we will bless the Lord from this time on and for evermore. Praise the Lord! Zech. 1:12 Then the angel of the Lord said, “O Lord of hosts, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which you have been angry these seventy years?” Luke. 16:9 And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes. Luke 16:27. He replied, “What is impossible for mortals is possible for God.” Jere. 31:15 Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more. Judges 13:17.

(8) Since God not only listens to the prayer of saints, but also scans the 'faith and intention of those who seek their help, in whatever way we consider, prayer to the saints in very good and highly rewarding.

(9) Whatever we do to the saints, as the loved ones of God, without equating them with God, are good and pleasing before Him. (10) Angels and the spirits of saints know what is happening in the world, through the spiritual power that God has given them, and not through omniscience by nature. (11) While the power that Satan had before his fall has not been taken away from him after the fall, it shall be an insult to God and his servants, to say that the holy angels and the spirits of the saints who have attained perfection, are not given to know even things about themselves. The departed saints, and the living ones praying for others, and being requested to pray for others, are only through the sole mediation of Christ; and never against it or in negation of it. Also

Then Manoha said to the angel of the Lord, "What is your name, so that we may honour you when your words come true?" Jere. 15:1, Matthew 27:46-49.

(8) Acts. 5:14-16 Yet more than ever believers were added to the Lord, great numbers of both men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on cots and mats, in order that Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he came by. A great number of people would also gather from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all cured.

(9) Matthew 25:40 And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

(10) 2 Sam. 14:20. In order to change the course of affairs your servant Job did this. But my lord has wisdom like the wisdom of the angel of God to know all things that are on the earth. Luke 15:10, Heb. 12:22, Jere. 31:15.

(11) Matthew 4:6 saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Gen. 3:1. Job 1.

prayer for each other in ordained by God. Therefore, prayer to the saints, does not decrease the power of the sole mediation of Christ or belittle it.

If the request to the departed saints, “pray for us” amounts to insulting the mediation of Christ, then the request to the living saints, “pray for us” also amounts to insulting the same mediation. Thus it is difficult to understand the reasoning of those who say that the intercession of the living does not insult the mediation of Christ, but the intercession of the departed ones does. However, since prayer for each other and to the departed saints has been in vogue from very early times, and is befitting to the truth of the Bible, and it is being observed in the Holy Church to this day, and are seen to be highly beneficial, it is right and in order to observe it with devotion.

Chapter 20

ABOUT PRAYER FOR THE DEPARTED

It was for the sake of human beings, from Adam onwards to the last, that our Lord was born as a human being, observed fasting, offered himself as a sacrifice, descended into hades and preached there, rose from the dead, ascended to heaven, sat on the right hand side of His Father, and intercedes on our behalf. He did and continues to do it that there shall be (2) graceful and just means to save them in the fullness of His love for his creations.

Chapter 20

(1) Rom. 5:18. Therefore just as one man’s trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man’s act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. 1 Peter 3:19, John 17:20, Luke 7:14,15.

(2) 1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

the human beings; (3) also to give to all humans a faultless and perfect example. Therefore, as becomes perfect love, we too, following the example given to us by our Savior and teacher, should wish and pray for the salvation of all people from the time of Adam. (4) Just as Christ, who is the head, reckons all humans from Adam to the last as His own body and cares for them, it is becoming that all from Adam to the last who are body parts of each other shall, as parts of each other, bear burdens mutually, and pray for each other. We pray for ourselves and for our brethren, who are alive, saying, "Lord, forgive our sins" not because there is the possibility that we shall continue to live in our body and grow in righteousness, and God shall forgive our sins. Besides, when we pray for those who are on their death bed, for their remission of sins, we do not pray that they be made to continue to live in the body and do righteous deeds, and then forgive their sins. We only pray that, whether they live or die, God may forgive their sins in his mercy. God has decreed the time upto the last judgement as the period of mercy, not only for the living and those who are on the death bed, but also for (5) those who died with hope in God.

(3) 1 Peter 2:21. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. John 13:15.

(4) Eph. 5:23, 29. For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church. 1 Cor. 12:12-27, Gala. 6:2.

(5) Ruth 2:20 "Blessed be he by the Lord, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!" Psal. 88:10-12. Do you work wonders for the dead? Do the shades rise up to praise you? Is your steadfast love declared in the grave, or your faithfulness in Abaddon? Are your wonders known in the darkness, or your saving help in the land of forgetfulness? 1 Peter 3:19.

Prayer and sacrifice for the dead was a practice in the Jewish Church, (6) what our Lord practised and taught his disciples, (7) what the Apostles too practised, and what is practised in the Church from very early times to this day. The hope of the departed regarding their salvation is augmented through our prayers; their sins are forgiven and they get consolation. Therefore, prayer for the dead is befitting, necessary and beneficial. However, if a worldly minded person, takes life for granted thinking that others will pray for him when he is alive, and even after his death, it amounts to one of the deadly sins. (8) And, even if all the saints, prophets and all the people of the world pray for him, he will not become eligible for grace. (9) Since he follows the negative reasoning that says, let us continue in sin, so that grace shall increase," he shall be devoid of grace. Those who receive grace while alive and even after death by prayers of others, are those who become eligible for grace with their firm faith in God, even though they have committed sins, but not deadly sins.

(6) Deu. 33:6 May Reuben live, and not die out, even though his numbers are few. 2 Macca. 12:42-43 and they turned to supplication, praying that the sin that had been committed might be wholly blotted out. The noble Judas exhorted the people to keep themselves free from sin, for they had seen with their own eyes what had happened as the result of the sin of those who had fallen.

(7) 2 Tim. 1:16-18 May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain; when he arrived in Rome, he eagerly searched for me and found me. May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day! And you know very well how much service he rendered in Ephesus. 1 Cor. 15:29. Acts 20:10.

(8) Psal. 109:14 May the iniquity of his father be remembered before the Lord, and do not let the sin of his mother be blotted out. Jere. 15:1, 16:6-7, 17:1.

(9) Rom. 6:1 What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound?

Chapter 21

ABOUT FASTING, HOLY QURBANA, GIVING ALMS ETC FOR THE SAKE OF THE DEPARTED

Besides, conducting prayers for parents and brethren who have slept in the Lord, (1) fasting for their sake, (2) offering Holy Qurbana on their memorial day, which recalls the sacrifice of our Lord, and entreats His mercy, giving alms which brings us mercy and grace from God, are good and pleasing before God. Whatever our Lord did, and also his sacrifice, are not only for the living, but also for the departed. According to the example he has showed us, we shall do everything we can, by word and deed, not only for those who are living, but also for our departed; offering Holy Qurbana daily, and spending all wealth for feeding the poor, shall bring absolutely no benefit, to those who die with no faith in Christ, and are not eligible for the grace of God. However, those who do these good works with good intention, shall reap benefit out of them.

Chapter 21

(1) 1 Sam. 31:13 The battle pressed hard upon Saul: the archers found him, and he was badly wounded by them. 2 Sam. 1:12 Abner son of Ner, and the servants of Ishbaal son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon.

(2) Acts. 10:4 He stared at him in terror and said, "What is it, Lord?" He answered, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God." Dani. 4:27.

Chapter 22

ABOUT HOLY RELICS

(1) We are to treat the Tomb of our Lord, and also the bones and relics of saints with respect and devotion. (2) Those who remember the power of our Lord, and the gifts he has given to his saints, and treat their relics with devotion, shall receive from God blessings and healing for their illness and other infirmities.

Chapter 23

ABOUT MAKING THE SIGN OF THE CROSS AND ADORATION OF THE CROSS

(1) The sign of the cross shall be made on us to remind us that we should seek refuge in the death of Christ on the cross for our protection and salvation, and that we shall always carry the cross in us, which signifies the passion of Christ, and that His Cross is the sign and pride of us Christians; and to proclaim that we believe it and do accordingly. Since the whole of mankind was saved by the Cross of the Son of God, we shall adore it. The Cross that we should adore is not that which is made in the shape of a cross, using gold, silver, stone or wood. They are made as a

Chapter 22

(1) 1 King 13:31. After he had buried him, he said to his sons, "When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones." 2 King 23:17-18, Exo. 13:19.

(2) 2 King 13:21. As a man was being buried, a marauding band was seen and the man was thrown into the grave of Elisha; as soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he came to life and stood on his feet. Matthew 9:20,21, 14:36, Acts 5:5, 19:2.

Chapter -23

(1) Gala 6:14. May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 1 Cor.1:18. Heb. 13:13, Matthew 16:24 Philip: 3:18.

memorial for our knowledge. One of the main reasons why a cross is not consecrated, is this. But nevertheless, the great God who cannot be seen or turned into a shape, shall be shaped in our hearts, and we look at it with our spiritual eyes and adore it. Likewise, we are to shape the cross of the son of God in our hearts, look at it with our spiritual eyes and adore it. (2) When we adore before the cross, it amounts to adoring the Lord who was crucified, and his death on the cross. Just what David did in front of the ark of the covenant, was reckoned as an act done before God, not as idolatry; adoring Christ and his death on the Cross shall be reckoned a blessing and not as idolatry. It is only decreed that (3) no images shall be made and worshipped.(4) However, it is not considered as idolatry to make cross and other things for remembrance of Biblical events,(5) for information and for the decoration of the church, and using the church and church articles with respect and devotion.

(2) Heb. 11:21 By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, "bowing in worship over the top of his staff." 2 Sam. 6: 14-16.

(3) Exo. 20:4 You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. 2 Kings 18:4.

(4) Exo. 25:18 You shall make two cherubim of gold; you shall make them of hammered work, at the two ends of the mercy seat. Num. 21:8. And the Lord said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." Josh. 4:3-7.

(5) Lev. 12:4 she shall not touch any holy thing, or come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purification are completed. 2 Sam. 6, Dani.5.

Chapter 24

ABOUT CHASTITY

Though it is not right to deny marriage to anyone, (1) it is very good if a person decides by his own will not to marry, and keep his body and spirit unblemished before God, and work for God. (2) If a person takes a vow to be celibate, but later breaks his vow and marries, though he is not ineligible for salvation, he cannot be considered as faultless. Such individuals shall be cut off from the honor and position they have in the church.

Chapter 25

ABOUT MARRIAGE OF THE CLERGY

Marriage is not unclean. But Church hierarchs like Patriarch, Catholicos, Metropolitan etc.; because they are specially responsible officials in the church, who should be constantly concerned about the church, they should be chaste and clean; and they should have emptied themselves from desires of the flesh, and surrendered their body and soul for God's work. Because priests who administer the parishes will have to move closely with

Chapter 24

(1) 1 Cor. 7:7,8,32,33. I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has a particular gift from God, one having one kind and another a different kind. To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is well for them to remain unmarried as I am. I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to please the Lord; but the married man is anxious about the affairs of the world, how to please his wife. Matthew 19:12.

(2) 1 Tim. 5:12 and so they incur condemnation for having violated their first pledge.

women, as they do with men, (1) and human nature is frail and could easily be tempted, (2) it is most reasonable that the Church has decided that they should be upright, married, and never involved in remarriage or marriage of widows.

Chapter 26

ABOUT THE SPIRIT OF MAN

(1) God has decreed condemnation and salvation for man, for body and spirit; not for body alone, or for spirit alone. (2) Spirit is created by God, just as the body is. Though the spirit is created intelligent and eternal, it is not without impediments. The teaching of some people that the spirit of man is a part of God, and not created; and so it is not subject to condemnation, is a great heresy, and something that drags human beings to serious calamity.

Chapter 25

(1) 1 Cor. 7:5-6. Do not deprive one another except perhaps by agreement for a set time, to devote yourselves to prayer, and then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. This I say by way of concession, not of command.

(2) 1 Tim.3:2. Now a bishop must be above reproach, married only once, temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an apt teacher. Lev.21:13-14 He shall marry only a woman who is virgin. A widow, or a divorced woman, or a woman who has been defiled, a prostitute, these he shall not marry. He shall marry a virgin of his own kin. Tit. 1:6, 1 Cor. 7:8, 27.

Chapter 26

(1) Matthew 10:28 Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul: rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

(2) Gen.1:27 So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them. Zech. 12:1 Thus says the Lord, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth and formed the human spirit within.

Chapter 27

ABOUT SIN

(1) It is not only that all human beings are liable to be condemned because of original sin, but also all are condemned because of the sins of their actions. Though it is true that no human being is without sin, (2) sin is not something created in man by nature. (3) It is related to the law of God, and sin was made when the law of God was violated. (4) Man does good or evil, because of his freedom and not because of the variations of nature in creation. God never created anyone as a sinner. (5) He never

Chapter 27

(1) Rom. 5:18 Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. Rom. 3:9-12 What then? Are we any better off? No, not at all; for we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin, as it is written: "There is no one who is righteous, not even one; there is no one who has understanding, there is no one who seeks God. All have turned aside, together they have become worthless; there is no one who shows kindness, there is not even one." Gala. 3:22 But the scripture has imprisoned all things under the power of sin, so that what was promised through faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. Psal. 14:13. 1 John 1:8, 1 Kings 8:46, Eccl. 7:21.

(2) Eccl. 7:29 See, this alone I found, that God made human beings straightforward, but they have devised many schemes. Gen. 1:26-27, 31.

(3) 1 Cor. 15:56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. Rom. 4:15 For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. Rom. 5:13 sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law.

(4) Deu. 11:26,27,28 See I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn from the way that I am commanding you today, to follow other gods that you have not known. Deu. 30:15-20.

(5) James 1:13,14,15. No one when tempted, should say, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil and he himself

compels anyone to do good or evil, to reward him accordingly. (6) But God makes it known to man what is good or evil; and it is God's desire that man shall turn to good and do good, and He helps man for that. He does not help man to do evil, since He does not like it, (7) and He leaves everything to the will of man. (8) Satan is not given the power to compel anyone to do evil. (9) Satan makes man fall into sin only through temptation. Just as faith and good works vary, sins too vary. (10) However, there is no sin which will not be forgiven through repentance. Those sins, which are said to be for death, and against the Holy Spirit, are those which are not repented; which easily push man to helplessness. Such sins are not forgiven by the prayer of others alone. Therefore, we should not be frustrated about any sin, but should repent before the (11) merciful Lord with broken heart and tears.

tempts no one. But one is tempted by one's own desire, being lured and enticed by it; then, when that desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and that sin, when it is fully grown, gives birth to death. 1 Peter 5:2 to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it not for sordid gain but eagerly. Isa. 1:19,20 2 Cor. 9:7.

(6) Mic.6:8 He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? 1 Tim. 2:4 who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. Rom. 8:28.

(7) Psal. 81:12. So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts, to follow their own counsels.

(8) James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

(9) Eph. 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

(10) John 19:11 one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.

(11) Jere. 3:12 Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say: Return, faithless Israel, says the Lord. I will not look on you in anger, for I am merciful, says the Lord; I will not be angry forever.

Chapter 28

ABOUT REPENTANCE

(1) When a person does not repent about the sins he has committed, and continues to do them, unwilling to move away from them, then it can be said his sin is unto death, and against the Holy spirit. (2) However, any sinner, if he turns to God with sincere repentance, his sins shall be forgiven, whatever they be. True repentance is to grieve and ask pardon for sins (3) and stop committing sins; and resolve at heart to sincerely obey God in future as it pleases Him. The door of repentance shall not remain closed for any sinner. The teaching of the heretic “Navatheenar” that post-baptism sins, because they are against the Holy Spirit, shall not be forgiven, is not to be believed; and no sinner shall listen to it and retract from repentance. Instead, they should repent with good hope and true faith about all the sins committed at any time or in any state and turn to God.

Chapter 28

(1) Luke 12:10. And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. 1 John 5:16. If you see your brother and sister committing what is not a mortal sin, you will ask, and God will give life to such a one—to those whose sin is not mortal. There is sin that is mortal; I do not say that you should pray about that. Matthew 12: 31, 32, Heb. 6:4,5,6.

(2) Isa. 1:18 Come now, let us argue it out, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be like snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleans us from all unrighteousness. Mich. 7:18, 19. Hos. 14:4,5,6. Jere. 3:12.

(3) Matthew 18:21,22 Then Peter came and said to him. “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.” Matthew 26:74,75 Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, “I do not know the man!” At that moment the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: “Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.” And he went out and wept bitterly.

Chapter 29

ABOUT JUSTIFICATION

(1) Just as faith without works is dead, (2) actions which do not arise from good conscience and faith are also dead. (3) The grace of God for mankind is not discriminatory, it is given to all uniformly. He never gives free grace to one and not to another. Therefore, man is not justified by faith alone without works, or by works alone without faith; nor free grace alone. (4) But justification is through free grace, by faith and works.

Chapter 30

THAT THERE ARE VARIATIONS IN CONDEMNATION AND PUNISHMENT

(1) The faith and righteousness of all people are not of the same measure. In the same manner, the sins of all people are not of the same measure. There are variations in faith, righteousness and

Chapter 29

(1) James 2:17, 26 So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead. For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.

(2) Rom. 14:23 for whatever does not proceed from faith is sin. Matthew 6:3 But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.

(3) Rom. 3:22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction. Rom. 10:11,12,13.

(4) James 2: 21, 22 Was not our ancestor Abraham justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was brought to completion by the works. Eph. 2:8. For by grace you have been saved through faith.

Chapter 30

(1) Rom. 12:6 We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith. Matthew 8:10. When Jesus heard him, he was amazed and said to those who followed him, "Truely I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith." Matthew 14:31, 5:22, 7:3, John 19:11.

sin. (2) Also, God does not give punishment or salvation on the day of judgement uniformly for all; but they vary according to the measure of faith and works of each one. (3) And that is eternal punishment or eternal salvation. (4) If a person turns from good to evil, then his earlier good shall not be remembered. Similarly, if a person turns from evil to good, his earlier evil shall not be remembered. But each one shall receive eternal salvation or eternal condemnation, according to the standing that each one has in terms of good or evil. (5) This merciful and just decision of God, instills in repentant person hope and interest. But the teaching of some people that salvation is predestined by God and is through free grace, it shall be the same for all, amounts to making the righteous God an unrighteous one.

(2) Matthew 7:2 For with the judgement you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Luke. 12:47. 48:1, 1 Cor. 15:41, 42, John 14:2.

(3) Matthew 25:46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. John 3:16, 36.

(4) Ezek. 18:21,22-24. But if the wicked turn away from all their sins that they have committed and keep all my statutes and do what is lawful and right, they shall surely live; they shall not die. None of the transgressions that they have committed shall be remembered against them; for the righteousness that they have done, they shall live. Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, says the Lord God, and not rather that they should turn from their ways and live? But when the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity and do the same abominable things that the wicked do, shall they live? None of the righteous deeds that they have done shall be remembered; for the treachery of which they are guilty and the sin they have committed, they shall die.

(5) Luke. 15:17,18,19 But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands"'

Chapter 31

ABOUT RESURRECTION

Body and soul separate through death, and body is turned to dust. (1) But on the Last Day, the body shall be resurrected, and shall unite with the spirit, put on incorruption, and suffer eternal condemnation or eternal salvation. However, it should not be believed in any way, what some heretics and infidels say; that there is no resurrection or that resurrection is only for the righteous, or that resurrection means the spirit leaving one body to enter into another.

Chapter 32

ABOUT FREEDOM OF CREATIONS, FOREKNOWLEDGE, PREDESTINATION

Though man by nature is liable to lean towards good or evil, (1) human nature is created with the power of free will that he can behave as he chooses. Just as a person has the freedom to commit sin, he has the freedom not to commit sin, if he wills. God only wants that man shall turn his free will towards good, but he never compels anyone to do good or evil, and rewards condemnation or salvation accordingly. However, he helps those who ask him, to do good. Because, eventhough it is true that

Chapter 31

(1) Isa.26:19 Your dead shall live, their corpses shall rise. O dwellers in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a radiant dew, and the earth will give birth to those long dead. Dani. 12:2. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. John 5:28,29, Rom.6:5. 1 Cor.15. Eze.37

Chapter 32

(1) Deu. 30:19 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live. Deu.11:26,27.

God has given man sharp intelligence and freedom to turn to what is good and abhor evil, (2) man does not have the power to do any good by himself without the power of God. (3) Because God hates evil, he does not help man to do evil, but leaves him to his own will. (4) God has the foreknowledge even before the creation of the universe, that such and such people shall be eligible for eternal life, trusting in grace through His Son; and that such and such people shall be eligible for eternal condemnation. (5) But God has not ordained earlier that such and such people shall inherit eternal life, and such and such shall inherit eternal hell. (6) It is not that God has no power and authority to appoint and sanctify for his service those about whom he has foreknowledge, (7) Nor is it that He has not set apart and sanctified those whom he has known

(2) John 15:5 because apart from me you can do nothing. Acts 17:28 For 'In Him we live and move and have our being'.

(3) Psal. 81:12. So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts, to follow their own counsels. Acts. 14:15 James 1:13, 14, 15.

(4) Acts.2:23. This man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. Rom. 8:29, 11:21, Peter 1:2.

(5) Mich. 6:3, 4. "O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? answer me!" For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of slavery; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. Isa.5:3,4 And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? Rom. 2:4,5,6 Do you not realize that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? But by your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourselves on the day of wrath, when God's righteous judgement will be revealed. Rom.11:20,21,22. Isa.1:16-20.

(6) Rom. 9:21 Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one object for special use and another for ordinary use? Jere. 1:5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

(7) Rom. 8:29,30 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of the Son, in order that he might be the first

in his foreknowledge, that they shall be eligible for his grace and his call. (9) It only means that God is unbiased, and full of justice and mercy. He does not create and predestine some people so that they become evil, and then punish them; nor does he create and predestine some people so that they become righteous, and then save them; It also means that he does not make some people inherit eternal life and some others eternal hell after making them do good or evil as predestined by him while denying them freedom of will. But the teaching of some people that whatever things men do, they are made to do so by God as predestined by Him, and these actions shall never be the cause for salvation or condemnation; that salvation and condemnation are given as predestined; shall generate in men the evil thought that “everything will happen as predetermined by God, irrespective of whatever I will or not.” This will drag men to great dangers like disappointment, disinterest in spiritual matters and unholy activities; and it makes a righteous God unrighteous.

Chapter 33

ABOUT THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

All are bound to accept as prominent those books in the old and new testament, written through the Holy Spirit, set apart and confirmed by the holy Fathers canonically.

born within a large family and those he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

(9) Rom. 2:11 For God shows no partiality. Psal. 19:9-10 the ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb. 1 Peter 1:17, 23.

Names and number of the important books in the Old Testament

| | |
|---|----|
| Books of Moses | 5 |
| Book of Joshua, son of Nun | 1 |
| Book of Judges | 1 |
| Book of Ruth | 1 |
| Esther (it is not included in the Bible we use today) | |
| Books of Samuel | 2 |
| Books of Kings | 2 |
| Books of Chronicles | 2 |
| Books of Ezra (including Nehemiah) | 2 |
| Book of Maccabees | 3 |
| Book of Job | 1 |
| Book of David containing 150 Psalms | 1 |
| Books of Solomon | 4 |
| Book of Prophets | 16 |
| Old Testament--Total | |
| (including the 39 books of Protestant Churches) | 41 |

In the above list, there is mention about four books of Solomon because his Book of Proverbs is divided into two. Proverbs chapter 25, verse 1, gives a title. "Solomon's Deep Proverbs." Hence the next portion of the book is considered as a separate book. In the 16 prophetic books, book of Daniel is included with Soosan.

The important books in the New Testament and their number are as follows:

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Evangelion (gospels) books | 4 |
| Epistles of Paul | 14 |

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Epistles of Peter | 2 |
| Epistles of John | 3 |
| Epistle of James | 1 |
| Epistle of Judah | 1 |
| Epistles of Clement | 2 |
| Book of Acts of the Apostles | 1 |

The following books are also approved in the church as important. However, Fathers like Athanasius the great, Dionysius of Alexandria have expressed doubts about some of them, and have recommended some others be read for learning and edification. The following books belong to this category:

The Big Book of Wisdom of Solomon:

Book of Baraseera

Book of Esther

Book of Judith

Book of Tobit

‘Didache’ of Apostles

Books of Shepherd Hermas

Book of Revelations of St. John

Epistle of Baranabas

Revelations of Paul and others

The Holy Bible

Our books (Orthodox) $41 + 28 = 69$

Protestant $39 + 27 = 66$

All the books written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, are useful for teaching, good counsel, exercise in righteousness, and confirmation in faith. Therefore just as liturgical books, devotional hymns, sermons, interpretations, historical books, Canon laws etc. prepared by the Doctors of the Holy Orthodox Church are approved in the Church, such writings prepared in future shall be approved only after being examined by the chief hierarchs of the church.

Chapter 34

ABOUT THE COUNCILS (SYNODS) AND THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH

Infidel kings and lords used to severely persecute the Christian Church even after the time of our Lord and the death of His Apostles. However, the church truly held on to their faith and practices, without polluting them. When the church had peace and comfort after the time of the persecutions, (1) many heretics rose from within the church, started interpreting passages of the Holy Bible as it pleased them, and started teaching heresies which were contrary to the teachings of our Lord and His Apostles. Therefore on orders of Christian kings of those days three universal councils of the church assembled in Nicea, Constantinople and Ephesus; the heresies were exposed and the heretics were expelled from the church, the true faith was confirmed, and regulations were devised for the maintenance of the church.

Chapter 34

(1) Acts 20: 29, 30 I know that after I have gone, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them. Matthew 24:4,5. Colo.2:8, 2 John 10,11

(2) Hence, no one has the authority to receive or teach anything contrary to the exhortations of our Lord and his Apostles, (3) and the customs and regulations decided and confirmed by Holy Fathers, who assembled for the universal councils at Nicea, Constantinople and ephesus, for confirming the faith. The universal councils of our Catholic and Apostolic Church, in which the bishops and priests assemble, have the authority to organize the observances and offices, which are in consonance with the true faith and exhortations, befitting the times and places. The order of sevice of the sacraments of Baptism, Holy Quarbana (Eucharist), Matrimony etc, the order of service for special days like Epiphany, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter, Pentecost Sunday etc, are congruent with our true faith and exhortations, and they are being accomplished according to the books of Liturgy approved by the Holy Orthodox Church. Therefore no one can arbitrarily change any of them. (4) The church and its administrators have the authority to expel and excommunicate those who become enemies of the true faith, or create antagonism in the church, or disobey the commandments of the church and the orders of their higher authorities, or act in a demonic manner. Those who are expelled from the church are to be considered as infidels, till they come back with true repentance.

(2) Gala. 1:8,9 But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that one be accursed! Pro.22:28 Do not remove the ancient landmark that your ancestors set up.

(3) Acts 16:4 As they went from town to town, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem. Rom.14:19. 1 Cor. 8:12 Tito 1:5.

(4) 1 Cor. 5:4.5 For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present I have already pronounced judgement in the name of the Lord Jesus on the man who had done such a thing. When you are assembled, and my spirit is present with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to hand this man over to satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. Matthew 18:18, 2 Cor. 2:6, 7:8.

**Given below are the names of some heretics of
early times and their teachings in brief**

1. Simon the sorcerer

He exhibited himself as 'Father' to the Jews, as 'Son' to the Samaritans, and as "Holy Spirit" to the infidels through his sorcery, and taught that there is no resurrection of the dead.

2. Manthros

He was a disciple of Simon the sorcerer. He taught that those who got baptized by his hands would become greater than angels.

3. Sutrininos

He taught; The world was created by seven angels. God said, "Let's create man in our image and likeness," only addressing these seven angels. It was the angels who prescribed the Laws", Marriage is from the evil one because, devils help evil men, and the Saviour came to help good people.

4. Baasil-dos

He introduced the heresy of "Galsalikars" who were snake worshippers. He declared openly that there are 365 heavens, according to the total number of days of the year. He also taught that men should fulfil their carnal desires.

5. Abiyoonaars

He taught that the origin of Messiah was from Mary and Joseph.

6. Karianthos

He taught that, after resurrection, we would fulfil our sweet desires for 1000 years, in the earthly Jerusalem. Also that

the world was created by angels, and that the birth of Messiah happened in the human way

7. **Mletheenos**

He taught that our Lord brought his body from heaven, and he entered the virgin as in a bottle of incense fragrant rose-water.

8. **Kardun**

He was of the view that First Beings were many, and there is no resurrection of the dead.

9. **Markos**

He amazed many by speaking the Hebrew language, took multiple titles and duped several people.

10. **Markian**

He taught that there are three First Beings: - the Good one, the Righteous one, and the carnal, Evil one. Of these, the Righteous one created everything with the body, and gave the Old Testament to human beings. But in order to save those who believe in him from the slavery of the Righteous one, the son the Good one, Jesus Christ came down. Christ did not become man, nor did he suffer passion; he was seen only as an illusion. The Good one gave the New Testament. There is no resurrection or judgement. He accepted only the prophetic books and the Gospel of Luke among the gospels.

11. **Tithians of Bes-Naharin**

He taught that marriage is fornication. He made a gospel by mixing all the four Gospels and called "Decathesron." From this he removed the list of generations, and all references which showed that Christ is from the progeny of David, and this

heretic effected changes in the Epistles of Apostles. The other heretics with him were called; 'Ethrikeethai'.

12. Munthos

He claimed himself to be the "Comforter". He had two wives- Prascala and Maksamala They were called as "Prophetesses". He taught in two cities of Asia, Pappos and Timan, which he called as "Jerusalem". But these heretics were put to death by the people of these cities themselves,

13. Bardaisan

Major Teachings:-

There are four First Beings- Fire, Water, Light and Air. Out of these four came out "gods" and "words". It was only the Archangel who spoke to Moses and prophets, and not God. Mary gave birth to the "Shining Spirit" that assumed the shape of man, and not actually a man subject to death. Angels and planets created human beings. Angels gave the spirit, and planets, the body parts. Christ was born under the influence of planet Jupiter, crucified under the spell of Planet Mars, and he rose from the dead again under the influence of planet Jupiter, there is no resurrection; and marriage is something that generates holiness.

14. Euriganis:

He did not have good faith in Trinity. He said there is no resurrection. This heretic was highly proficient in the word and in teaching, and he wrote a lot of interpretations for both the Old and New Testaments.

15. Hal-k-sanar

He said that even if one denies Christ by word of mouth, if that person confesses his faith in his heart, he shall be without

fault. This heretical sect had a book; and it was proclaimed that those who read that book shall gain remission of sins.

16. Navathis:

He taught that those who commit sin, after being baptized, will not be forgiven. But it is said that this heretic renounced Christ, during the persecution of Christians by Duchhios in 562 Greek Era.

17. Sabalios:

He propagated that what is referred to as Holy Trinity is actually only one person. In the Old Testament, he is referred to as Father, in the New Testament he gets incarnated as Son, and he talked through the Apostles in the form of the Holy Spirit.

18. Juvathis of Egypt

He recommended Jewish customs and taught that the holy ones shall get food and drink on earth for a thousand years.

19. Paule of Smasathaya

He kept teaching that Christ was an ordinary human being., who became eligible for the grace of God; and the origin of Christ was Mary. Eight beautiful women were with him and they used to sing hymns in his name; and he did not reckon fornication as a sin.

20. Mani

Mani called himself “Christ” and also “Holy Spirit”. His major teachings were as follows:

There were two First Beings - The Good God and the Evil Body. The sun and the moon- are the carriers which take the spirits of human beings, and all good things, to the region of

light. In the end, the good God shall cast into fire the body and all spirits who do not believe in Mani. Marriage comes from the evil one. There is no resurrection, death means only spirits going out of the body. Our Lord had no body and spirit. But his low estate, passion and also everything that he did were mere illusion. There are 25 gods, who have 12 women with them.

21. Arius:

He taught as follows: -

Son of God is a created being. God the Father created the Son, before the creation of everything else. The father made the Son create everything else. Therefore, the Son is not co-equal to the Father. Similarly, the Holy Spirit too, is not co-equal with the Father. The body which the Son assumed was without Spirit. It was Godhead in the place of the spirit. Arius changed the formula of Trinitarian glory; from "Glory be to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit" to, "Glory be to the Father, through the Son by the Holy Spirit". However Arius did not vary the words of baptism, as our Lord taught it: "baptised in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit", so that his evil and craftiness would not be easily exposed.

22. Navadi

This evil person made 94 "Revelations" and also "Books of Acts". According to him, there are Father of Life, Mother of Life, many Sons, several spirits and numerous gods.

He taught as follows:-

An angel created the angels. God is also subject to judgment. Therefore, like everything else, God and those who get united to him shall be effaced in the end. It was God who crucified Christ. Christ is a created being; his body is celestial. His suffering was only an appearance, actually he did not suffer;

his crucifixion too was only an appearance; he was not crucified in reality. Sin is there in the created nature. There is no resurrection, and marriage is unholy.

23. Macedonius

He taught that though the Son is co-equal to the Father, the Holy Spirit is not co-equal to the Father and the Son.

24. Eunomius

Teachings :-

God created the Son before creating everything else. Before putting everything in place, God created the Holy Spirit. Eunomius changed the practice of ‘baptizing in the Name of Trinity’ and started baptizing in the name of the death of Jesus. He used to wash the baptizand from head to the breast only, and left the rest of the body as evil. He also claimed that nothing of Godhead lies hidden to him, and that he knows everything. He dared to say that he knew God and His Nature, just as God knew him.

25. Narius

Teachings:-

Though the nature of Trinity is one, Narius talked about varying grades for the three persons—that the Father is great, the Son is greater and the Holy Spirit is the greatest. Even while Word became flesh, the spirit that he accepted was only the life of the vegetable nature and animals, and not a mature spirit. The Son did not assume a conscious mind; it was Godhead in the place of conscious mind. The body of our Lord was celestial. His nature was a “mixed” one. There is food and marriage, even after resurrection. Narius made 1000 psalms and claimed that they were better than the Psalms of David. His writings reveal that he followed the teachings of

Sabalias, since he said that the Incarnation and other acts of the Son are of the Holy Trinity.

26. Eusebius of Uraha

This man had some aged disciples who taught that dreams and activities of devils were revelations from the Holy Spirit. They also claimed that those who came to them shall receive the graces of the Holy Spirit. Also that they will feel nothing, even if they sleep with women. They said that body we carry is not useful in anyway.

27. Euthukha

He was seen to follow the faith of Ulathinus and Arpulinus. He taught that God the Word did not assume anything that is human, from the virgin. The Word got poured in, and became with the body. His body is not according to our nature. His nature is one mixed up and poured out.

28. Juliana of Phagag

He taught that as he got united to human nature, the nature of our Lord God transformed in divine nature. Therefore, he is according to our nature. Whatever He did while on earth, like His passion, death and so on are only illusion, and no reality.

29. Tri-teethar

This heretic sect taught that it is not three persons and one nature in Trinity; but there are three persons, each person having a separate nature. Therefore, Trinity is three persons, three natures and three gods.

30. Esthepan, son of Sudaile

Major Teachings: -

There is no eternal punishment, but punishment has an end. So evil men shall not be punished for ever. Similarly, it cannot

be said that there will not be any mercy even on devils. In the end everything will return to the divine nature. To confirm his teachings, he wrote a book and published in the name of Erthahos, to make it appear that it was written by Erthahos, the teacher of St. Dionysius.

Conclusion

The heresies of all the heretics listed above are against the basic teachings of the Holy Church. These heresies, at the time of their origin became somewhat strong, and a number of people accepted them. However, now God has effaced them completely that they are not to be seen in the world at all.

Though the churches of Nestorians, Greeks, Moranaya Syrians, Russians, Anglicans, Romans etc, have not joined the heresies described above, they follow different heretic teachings about the union of two natures in Christ—Divine and Human, and about the Procession of the Holy Spirit. About the union of two natures in Christ, some say it is as per God's will and operation; some say it is according to personhood, some others say it is according to pursupa(face) etc. Some of them say that divine and human natures are indivisibly united, but shall be called two natures, and that the Holy Spirit proceeds not only from the Father, but also from the Son.

However, Armenians, Copts and Ethiopians agree with the faith of the Jacobite(Orthodox) Syrians.





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